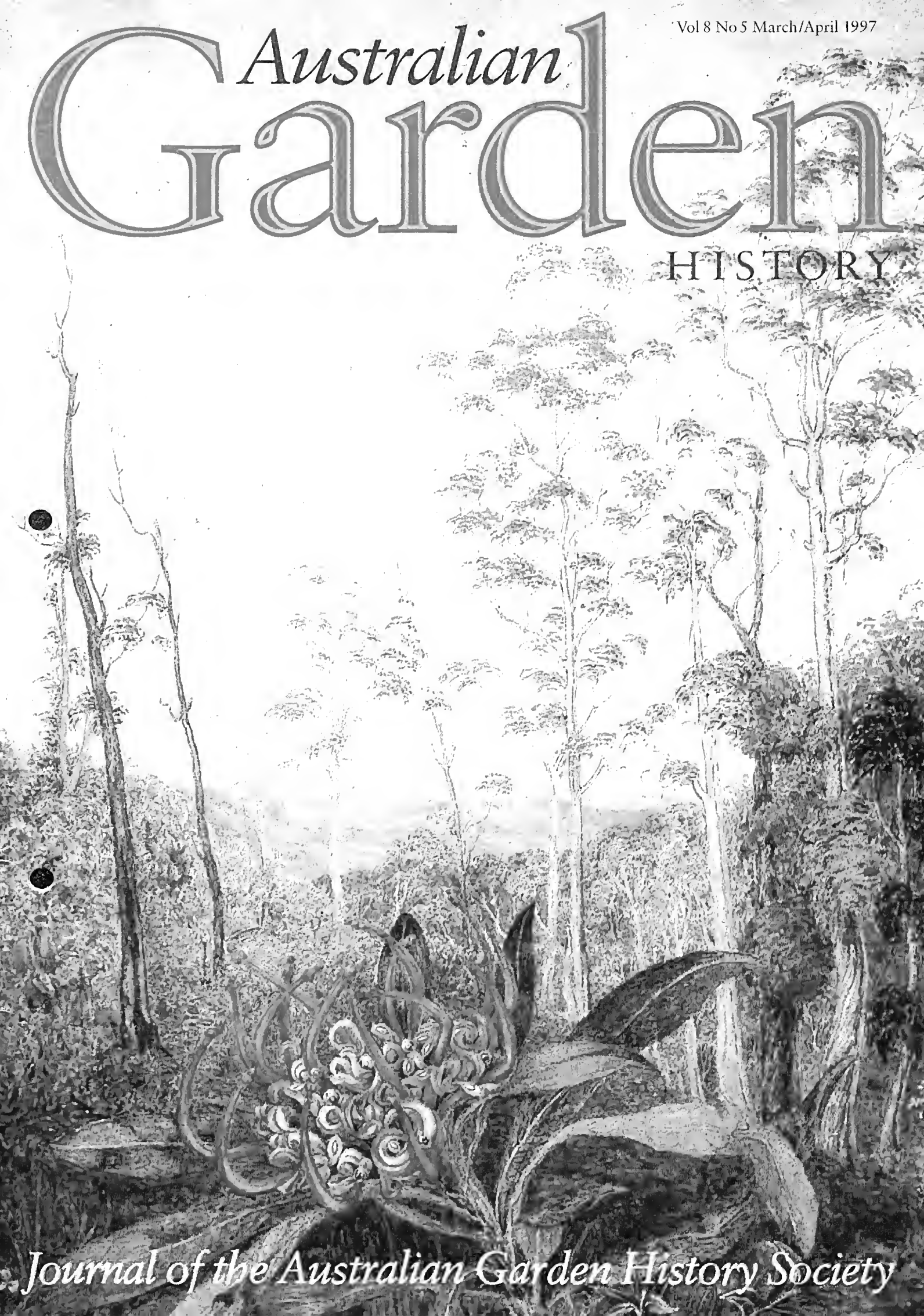


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Australian Garden

HISTORY



Journal of the Australian Garden History Society

by JOHN HAWKER

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FRONT COVER

Waratah from Upper Mills, Mount Wellington. Watercolour by Mary Morton Allport, exhibited in Hobart Town, 1858, from the Allport collection, State Library of Tasmania. See page 12.



The selection of plants for historic gardens can often be a challenging and sometimes frustrating, but rewarding experience. The plants used in gardens will reflect its period of establishment, the garden designer and the owners interests. The environmental conditions will also play an important part and there are examples of species being selected but failing to thrive under the extremes of temperature and water shortages. The plants grown will vary across Australia according to the climate, but nearly all gardeners will challenge the idea that any plant can be cultivated if given the right conditions. As early as 1858 Edward Henty of Burwood successfully cultivated in his conservatory *Clanthus damperi* (now *Swainsonia formosa*), Sturt's Desert Pea and won a silver medal at the Portland Horticultural Show.

Unlike other art forms, gardens are never static and are in a continual process of growth and decay. Gardens depend upon regular maintenance for their long term survival and need to be constantly renewed by informed and sensitive care. The selection of plants for historic gardens will depend upon its period of significance and type.

New plant introductions have been a continuing process and are eagerly sought by many gardeners. At the same time, many of the early introduced species and cultivars have been lost from cultivation due to fashion, disease and replacement by improved forms. Occasionally plants listed last century become fashionable again. The Chatham Island Forget-me-not (*Myosotidium hortensia*), listed by only one Victorian nursery in 1889, is now 'the plant of the moment'.

The most revealing information on the planting is the garden itself. A detailed survey of all existing vegetation, which may take several months, will show the composition of the planting. Further examination of the species introduction dates, photographs, plans and reports will help to reveal the evolution of the garden and the identification of missing plants. Once the planting layers can be determined and the period of significance has been identified, the process of replanting can commence.

The correct plant identification is a very important phase in plant selection for historic gardens. What appears to be the ordinary Lemon-scented Verbena (*Aloysia triphylla*) may in fact be the rare cultivar *A. triphylla* 'Bergamia'. Once the correct species and cultivar is known, it is possible to identify its date of introduction in the nursery trade e.g. *Pinus radiata* (1857), *Rosa* 'Lorraine Lee' (1924), *Fraxinus angustifolia* subsp. *oxycarpa* 'Raywood' (1931), and *Rosa* 'Iceberg' (1958). Many plants have had name changes and what appeared in old nursery catalogues, newspaper articles or records may now have a new botanical name. The commonly grown *Prunus* 'Shirotae' known to many as *Prunus* 'Mt Fuji' was also listed under ten other names. Other records may only list common names which may refer to several species.

A few gardens may have plans with the plantings identified. It is however necessary to compare these plans with what was actually grown. A detailed examination of other records, photographs, oral histories and descriptions will be necessary. Newspapers can be very rewarding in that they not only give information on the plantings, but also on the landscape character. A recent study on the Kamesburgh garden in Brighton discovered two articles in the *Australasian* (1876) and the *Weekly Times* (1877). A plan prepared in 1918 showed the location of many of the trees described in these articles, although the 'pines' are *Araucaria* spp.

A major problem when replanting historic gardens is the availability of plants. Many of the plants listed in early nursery catalogues or described in articles have disappeared from cultivation, although the situation has improved with an increase in specialist nurseries. I would be interested to know where one could find *Pelargonium* 'Mrs Pollock' and *P.* 'Mangle's Silver Variegated', both which grew at Kamesburgh.

A few organisations have been established to prevent the loss of old cultivars and species. In Victoria, the Ornamental Plant Collections Association was established to encourage the conservation plants. Through the Seed Savers Network there is a worldwide attempt to maintain old fruit and vegetable cultivars.

The selection of plants for historic gardens can be a time consuming process, but the rewards in locating original plantings and restoring gardens contribute greatly towards our heritage.

John Hawker

JOHN HAWKER is Horticulturist for Heritage Victoria. Previously, he was horticultural project officer at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. In 1989, John was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study in Europe. He has a major interest in the conservation and management of historic gardens and cemeteries.

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ONE PAGE LEADS TO ANOTHER

by GAY KLOK

ME? Me write a Bibliophilic Banter? I don't even know what it means! My heart felt a cold clutch of terror. Another challenge that I'd probably fail. 'I'm no writer,' I continued to protest. My pleas fell on deaf ears. Hard-hearted Trisha only replied, 'You can do it.'

Trisha didn't know my secret. From the age of three, I have been a compulsive, indeed you could say, closet reader. I was known to go missing for hours in a friend of my mother's linen cupboard where old magazines were stowed away. This was when I was six or seven and the range of printed material extended from *Man* to gardening publications. I must say that most of the important facts of life were learnt through the medium of literature.

When did my serious garden reading begin? During this period of life my mother and father would go many times to Sir John's and Lady Morris' wonderful home for Sunday night dinner.

Sir John was Chief Justice of Tasmania and Lady Morris was an intellectual, a feminist, an avid reader and a devoted gardener. Winmarleigh, a mansion built circa 1880 had magnificent, vast rooms and these included a magical library. Ten foot high walls were covered with built in book-cases, a ladder was used to reach half of the books. An Aladdin's Cave to this seven-year old book addict who had been known to read the writing on a Harpic container in other peoples' lavatories. The house was surrounded by many acres of ornamental gardens and bush.

Through these Sunday night gatherings, I dined with many famous personalities of both the legal and arts worlds. After dinner, the 'grownups' retired to the library for coffee and the discussions and arguments continued far into the early hours of the morning. My mother, being a Member of Parliament, had strong views on every subject. As the conversations raged, I would be put to sleep on a sofa placed in a window bay on the far side of the room. The only light came from standard lamps and the flicker of flames from the open fire. A blanket was thrown over me. I would curl up under the rug and make myself as small as possible. After a while, when the far ranging conversation was going full speed ahead, I would drape the rug over myself and creep, like a little ghost, to the nearest bookcase and grab a book. It so happened that this bookcase was crammed full of Lady Morris' gardening books. Listening to the fascinating talk, reading under the throw-over, I would hope with all my heart that I would be forgotten – and I usually was. So it came to be that in those pre-teen years, my knowledge of Gertrude Jekell was as extensive as my contemporaries awareness of the doings of Wanda Girl or Noddy.

Most of my life I lived within a garden. The play areas of my youth were on the beach and in the large gardens that surrounded the big houses of Sandy Bay. Given Tasmania's weather patterns, the garden memories of childhood pursuits far outnumber the beach scenarios. Recollections flash through my mind – the tree houses, really good

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Gay Klok

games of hide and seek and garden fetes to raise money for the fighting troops and where the children could taste such joys as toffee apples and persuade our parents to buy us home made toys or, in my case, books from the second hand stall. I remember the gang we formed, The Hedgeclimbers Adventurers. Points were awarded according to length of hedge and disposition of the owner. Detection by the poor owner earned demerits and a sound talking to. These tall hedges were mainly *Macrocarpa* and our mothers were often puzzled on seeing the rashes that adorned our small bodies at bath time.

Now I live with one of the few remaining *Macrocarpa* hedges surrounding my garden. As it is extremely long and I would not be too happy to see a group of little girls climbing along it, it may well have earned the reputation of the most challenging, the Gold Medal of all hedges. Though, on second thoughts, I may react quite kindly – now our hedge becomes the target of larrikin arsonists who have set it alight three times.

Another source that helped appease my addictive desire to read gardening books was Kitty Henry's library of gardening publications. (See *Australian Garden History* Vol. 8 no.2 1996.) I was introduced to William Robertson (I now own Kitty's copy of *English Flower Garden* (1893) and use it frequently), Edna Walling, Karel Capek (love his down-to-earth humour), Marion Cran, Cecil Roberts, Margery Fish, Russel Page and The Royal Horticulture Society's Journals, to mention but a few. Most of these have been written about by the other bookaholics but I will write further about the Beverley Nichol books that I borrowed from Kitty. From

various parts of the world, I have managed to collect most of his gardening writings.

Somehow, I forgive the 'twee-ness' of Beverley Nichols and thoroughly enjoy his writings. I like the caustic humour. My general knowledge has increased by learning of many things that take place in the garden scene. For example, did you know that gold fish can survive the winter under the thick ice that can form on the garden pond in an English garden? And that they may change colour and have sex and babies whilst sheltering there? I also read of the many pitfalls one encounters when renovating a country cottage property, both inside and out, the sufferings one must undertake when meeting the new neighbours and I read with an ironic smile of the mistakes we all make in our gardens. But as I walk *Down the Garden Path* on a *Garden Open Today* I remember that this author also taught me the beauty of simple flowers and how to treat every plant I grow as an individual with its own personality and desires.

Some years ago, it seems like a different life, I was extremely active in the political scene. I obtained endorsement for a safe seat into the Senate. For various reasons, I threw in this opportunity and my life took a distinct turn for the better. I turned to gardening pursuits. The children grew up and made their own nests and gardens. So, Kees and I decided to make a second garden and purchased 136 acres in the country to create another Eden for our wrinkly years. The knowledge gained from the hundreds of gardening books I had consumed over many years, was of enormous help in this creation of our Paradise from scratch. Books are still my passion; coffee table editions full of lush photographs (I gave myself for Christmas *The Collector's Garden* and *The Naturalist's Garden* by Ken Druse, superb photography); erudite tomes of garden creation (Sylvia Crowe); and, perhaps my favourite 'fix', the personal accounts of the making of a garden (V. Sackville West, Anne Scott James, Rosemary Verey, our good Aussie writers and Uncle Tom Copley and all), I succumb to each and every one of them. Through Internet and e-mail a new source has been opened up for me, the writings of American gardeners. These are the things that keep me up all night and with an empty bank account and big holes in my pockets.

Thank you, Trisha, for opening the memories of the halcyon days of my childhood and thank you to the myriads of writers who have given me such enjoyment, relaxation and knowledge over such a long time. I have absorbed the most important lesson, I have learnt it well and I now let the readers into the secret – the most important ingredient to successful gardening is the love the garden owner gives to their garden.

I have no regrets for the directional change that took place in my life. Plants are so much easier to live with than politicians – after all, they never answer back.

GAY KLOK gardens with her husband Kees in Hobart around their c.1817 cottage and at their country property, Kobbenjelok at Middleton with acres of garden and orchards surrounding a c.1875 farm house. Both gardens have been opened to members of the AGHS and for Australia's Open Garden Scheme. Gay says she is not trained in any official way, most knowledge coming from books, talking and visiting other gardens.

In the recent Colonial Plants section of AGHS (Jan/Feb 1997 issue), Robert Boden discussed Strawberry Trees in some detail. As he asked readers to contribute their observations, as well as referring to an article I had written, I thought it appropriate to throw in my two bob's worth.

Of course, I am not saying it doesn't fruit, just that I haven't witnessed it. As a hybrid there may be forms that do bear, just as there is a range of bark characteristics. Some have grey and flaky bark, with only a hint of red in it, much like one parent *A. unedo*. Others are much more like *A. andrachne*, with very thin red bark, peeling to reveal light green underneath. There are many variations in between.

There is much confusion about the identification of the Greek Strawberry Tree, *A. andrachne*. I believe that most of what is labelled as this in parks, gardens and nurseries is actually the hybrid. There is one very large tree in the Adelaide Botanic Gardens that we can be fairly confident about, and a young tree at the Albury Botanic Gardens looks like the genuine article, although I would be happy for someone with greater botanical skills than I to verify it.

I can report that *A. canariensis* is in cultivation in Australia, with a large and old specimen in the Yackandandah cemetery and another at Ararat. I have also seen young specimens flourishing in the Adelaide Botanic Gardens.

As far as I know, *A. glandulosa* is still available from specialist nurseries but as yet has not been grown widely enough to assess its value as a garden specimen. I would make the same comments for *A. canariensis* although I suspect this may be quicker growing, and therefore a more attractive option.

Kevin Walsh
5 Myring St, Castlemaine, Vic.

COLONIAL PLANTS

KAFFIR APPLE: *DOVYALIS CAFFRA*

by RICHARD NOLAN

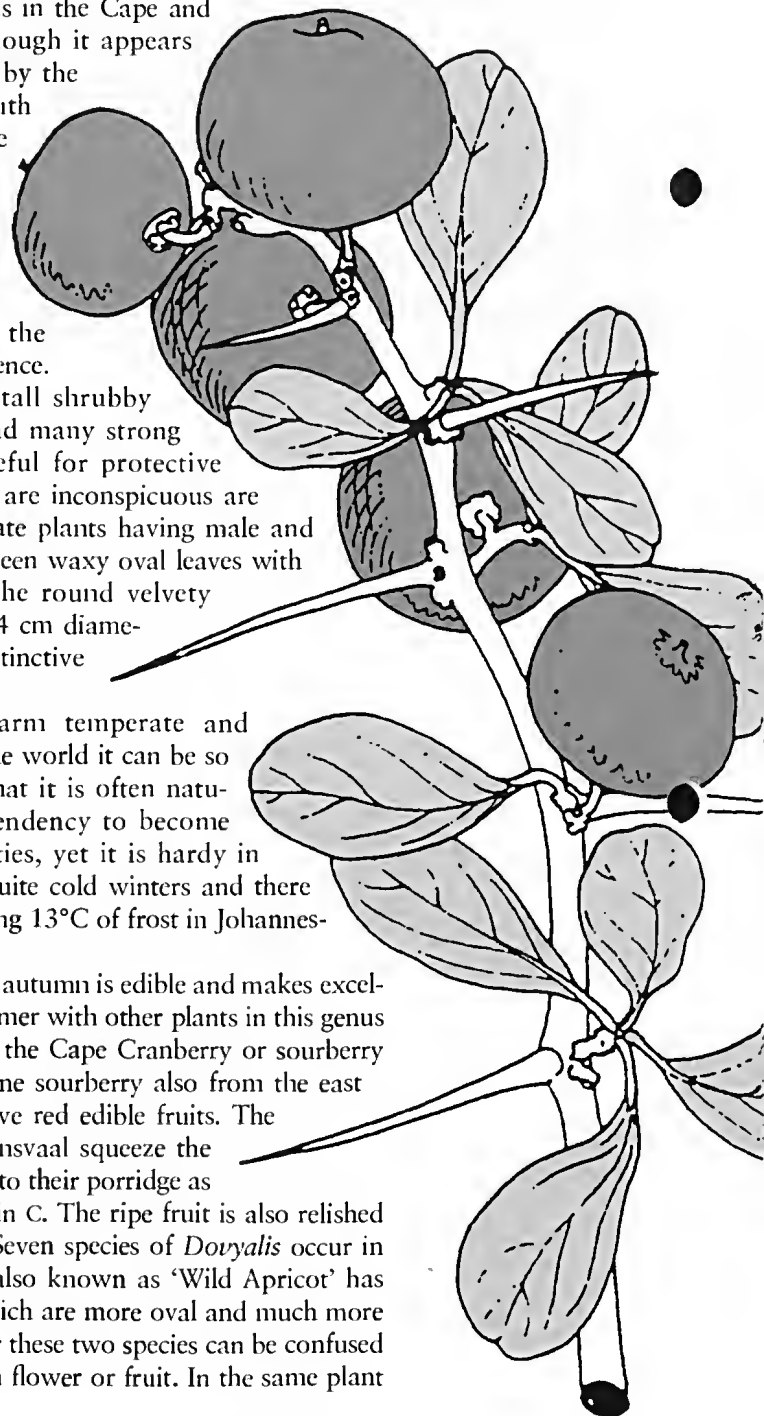
The Kaffir Apple, *Dovyalis caffra* (syn. *Aberia caffra*) belongs to the family Flacourtiaceae which contains many edible fruits, with about 30 species belonging to the genus *Dovyalis* with a geographical range from Africa to Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Kaffir Apple is a South African species extending in distribution from the East Cape to Transki.

The Kaffir Apple also known as Kei Apple, Dington's Apple and sometimes Wild Apricot, was widely planted in south and southeastern Australia as a hedge plant to separate house and homestead gardens from buildings, orchards, vegetable gardens and from livestock. The early colonists in South Africa made good use of this plant and hedges can still be found in old gardens in the Cape and Transvaal. Interestingly enough it appears this plant was overlooked by the first settlers to New South Wales who called via the Cape. It was not recorded or listed among those 'colonial plants' Allan Correy referred to in his research on early plant introductions which he presented at the AGHS 1995 Sydney Conference.

The Kaffir Apple is a tall shrubby plant with small leaves and many strong thorns making it very useful for protective hedges. The flowers which are inconspicuous are borne in late spring, separate plants having male and female flowers. The dark green waxy oval leaves with paler green waxy undersurfaces and the round velvety apricot yellow acid fruit 3-4 cm diameter make the bush very distinctive and easily recognisable.

Widely planted in warm temperate and Mediterranean regions of the world it can be so successful in those areas that it is often naturalised and may have a tendency to become rampant in warmer localities, yet it is hardy in England and can tolerate quite cold winters and there are records of plants surviving 13°C of frost in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The fruit which ripens in autumn is edible and makes excellent jams and pickles in summer with other plants in this genus and family. *D. rhamnoides*, the Cape Cranberry or sourberry and *D. rotundifolia*, the dune sourberry also from the east coast of southern Africa have red edible fruits. The Pedi Tribe of Northern Transvaal squeeze the juice of Kaffir Apple fruit onto their porridge as it is a good source of vitamin C. The ripe fruit is also relished by monkeys and baboons. Seven species of *Dovyalis* occur in Southern Africa. *D. tristis* also known as 'Wild Apricot' has smaller light yellow fruit which are more oval and much more acid than *D. caffra*, however these two species can be confused with each other when not in flower or fruit. In the same plant



family are also found the edible fruits Wild Peach, Red Pear, False Red Pear, Thorn Pear and Wild Mulberry.

In Australia, the use of Kaffir Apple as a hedge plant is widespread with many examples in drier regions of South Australia and Victoria. Occurrence is less common in Tasmania where Hawthorn appears to be planted more frequently as a hedge. I have no knowledge of the occurrence or use of Kaffir Apple in Western Australia. (Perhaps members might like to write to the Journal Editor if they know of good examples in Western Australia or Tasmania.)

The second hedge puzzle maze at Belair (1902) in South Australia replacing the earlier (1866) surviving and recently restored maze of hawthorn, *Crataegus monogyna* (see *Australian Garden History* Vol. 2 No. 6 1991 p.11, 'Restoration of Belair Maze') was Kaffir Apple planted by Park Commissioners with seeds raised in the park nursery. The 'Kaffir' Maze covered an area of $\frac{3}{4}$ acre and contained 600 plants put in on a similar plan to the original maze near the Belair Station. The layout of this maze can be seen in an aerial photograph taken in 1949 (reproduced in *Australian Garden History* Vol. 2 No. 6 1988, page 115). The photo shows the pattern of planting well. This maze grew so well that due to lack of maintenance in the late 1940s owing to a manpower shortage during World War II, the maze was so overgrown it had to be bulldozed to make way for tennis courts. Many middle aged and older Adelaidians can recall playing in the Belair 'Kaffir' Maze as children.

Good examples of 'Kaffir' Hedges in South Australia can be found at Roseworthy College (1840s planting), Old Anlaby Station at Kapunda, originally surrounding nursery and glasshouses planted in the 1850s and at Collingrove, Angaston where a low hedge separates the homestead garden from grazing cattle and most probably dates from early this century.

Although not in evidence now, Bungaree Station and Hill River Station at Clare may have had Kaffir Apple hedges but now exhibit the more commonly planted Olive hedge of which a good example is preserved enclosing the rose nursery (formerly orchard/vegetable garden) at Hughes Park, Watervale.

Near the City of Adelaide in the Northern Parklands there is a good example of a Kaffir Apple hedge 2m high surrounding the City Council's tree nursery on what was the site of an early botanic garden established by John Bailey which predates the 1855 current Botanic Gardens of Adelaide site.

South of Adelaide at McLaren Vale is a huge Kaffir Apple and Carob, *Ceratonia siliqua* hedge enclosing the Tatchilla Homestead garden. This interplanted hedge, over 4m high with its interplanted Carob looks very attractive

with the red tipped new growth of Carob and pale green/gold new growth of Kaffir Apple. Many of the suburban Kaffir Apple hedges in Adelaide gardens that were popular at the turn of the century have been removed but can often be found around churchyards, schools and colleges and railway stations. In the Belair National Park (second oldest National Park in Australia) the Park Maintenance staff continue to clip a low Kaffir Apple hedge bordering the roadway to Long Gully Kiosk and oval and there are a number of other Kaffir Hedges around residences within the Park. There is also a Kaffir Apple hedge at Loreto Convent, Marryatville, South Australia, formerly The Acacias, which is thought to date from the 1830s.

Kaffir Apple is easily raised from seed sown September-December and needs to be trimmed 2-3 times per year in warm climates to maintain its hedge shape. More frequent trimming discourages production of mature thorns which can be a hazard when handling hedge trimmings. These more frequent trimmings can be composted much more easily with safety, however a mechanised shredder would seem to be the best way of dealing with these prunings at any stage of trimming. As male and female plants have different spurts of growth, frequent trimming is required to maintain a hedge of uniform appearance when hedges are planted from seed raised plants. Cuttings from purely all female or all male plants will give a hedge of more formal appearance and will give much more ease of maintenance due to the uniform growth of plants from the same source.

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KAFFIR APPLE - KEI APPLE

FAMILY: Flacourtiaceae

NAME: The specific name 'Caffra' means Kaffir or African. The name 'Kei Apple' is derived from the River Kei around which the tree is common and the apple like appearance of the fruit.

USE: Valuable wood and excellent rough hedge. Edible fruits useful for jams, jellies and pickles.

CULTIVATION: Hardy and drought tolerant, not particularly frost tender, growth stout and impenetrable and takes clipping well.

DOVYALIS CAFFRA

PROPAGATION: Seed loses viability and should be sown soon after being gathered or kept moist in fridge until spring. Cuttings produce plants with uniform characteristics.

FLOWERS: Inconspicuous male and female flowers on separate plants in spring. Fruit ripens in autumn.

SIZE: Shrub to 3m or handsome tree to 9m which is often less spiny with a thick crown of shiny green foliage and light coloured sometimes silvery stem.

by PETER CUFFLEY



The Path To Your Door,
Peter Cuffley, oil on board.

So many of the plants which spring to mind when we think of old cottage gardens are simply the hardiest survivors. Unless they are long-lived or regenerate themselves readily, many old favourites are not there to be counted when we survey the remnants of an earlier planting.

A balanced view of these gardens in their prime, needs to be based on all sorts of available evidence. While most of the commonly used plants should be in early catalogues, it seems that some were simply shared between gardeners and were in the 'public domain'. Some 'old-fashioned' plants are relatively recent arrivals and there is no evidence of them being in Australian gardens in the nineteenth century or even in the early twentieth century. For the plants missing from the hardy survivors list we need to consult the records and talk to people who can pass on early memories. Carefully maintained collections of plants in, or known to have been in, old gardens, are also an essential resource.

At the time of writing, the cottage gardens in central Victoria are suitably 'steeped' with their hollyhocks and verbascums. The agapanthus are beginning their summer journey with starbursts of blue and white, their foliage so solidly green even in the glare of the hottest day. Nurseryman George Smith suggested agapanthus for the cottage garden in his handbook and catalogue published in Ballarat in 1862. Hollyhocks, *Alcea* in 'sorts' or 'fine mixed' were offered by Smith Adamson & Co. in 1854 and in 1864 Law Somner and Co. offered the finest double varieties 'six to eight feet tall'. *Verbascum thapsus* or Woolly Mullein is in the catalogues of Melbourne's John J. Rule dated 1855, 1857 and 1860. Some eighty years later Edna Walling writing of plants for the herbaceous border, described *Verbascum thapsus* as a 'noble

plant'. 'It comes in a lovely rich yellow and marvellous velvety cream, and they flower on right through summer'.¹

By all of the evidence, the popular 'geraniums', *Pelargonium* cultivars, have been the quintessential Australian cottage plant from the earliest decades of European settlement. There are many references to hedges of geranium in writings from the colonial era and to the presence of a few brave specimens in isolated settings where they might be the only 'garden flowers'. They can manage on very little water, but frosts make them difficult to grow in some areas. Writing in the eighteenth-forties of the contrast between New South Wales and 'cool moist greenness' in Hobart, Louisa Meredith notes that 'the little gardens before and between many houses in the middle of the town, with their great bushes of geraniums in bloom, were all full of sweet English spring flowers, looking happy and healthy...'²

Australian cottage gardens of the mid-nineteenth century might have also included marigolds, verbenas, wallflowers, chrysanthemums, larkspurs, aquilegias, pinks and picotees, phlox, poppies, campanulas, anemones, hyacinths, irises, violets, sunflowers, nasturtiums, Californian poppies, sweet peas, foxgloves, alyssum, lavender, rosemary, lilies and a selection of roses.

There were also those notable survivors, the hardy bulbs, corms and tubers. *Ixias*, *sparaxis*, *nerines*, *crocus*, *watsonias* and species *gladiolus* all thrive in regions which recall their South African homeland. *Ixia viridiflora*, the 'Blue-green' *ixia*, was offered by Australian nurseries in the mid-nineteenth century and is still seen in cottage gardens. Old home sites, long deserted, are marked out in Spring by rows or clumps of jonquils and snow flakes or less frequently, daffodils. Flat irises, *Iris x germanica*, may also be found surviving in such places. *Lonicera fragrantissima* or Winter Honeysuckle might surely be described as a worthy shrub which comes into its own when most of the garden is dormant. Its creamy white flowers and beautiful fragrance can brighten even the greyest winter day. It appears in the 1864 catalogue of Handasyde, McMillan and Co. of Melbourne. Together with *Chaenomeles japonica*, it is almost universally found in old cottage gardens. *Syringa vulgaris* and *Syringa persicum*, the common and the Persian lilac were both listed in J.J. Rule's 1857 catalogue, as was that handsome and most useful evergreen shrub *Viburnum tinus*.

An almost forgotten plant group in the creation of tradi-

tional style Australian cottage gardens are the succulents. One of the strong impressions to be gained when exploring old cottage gardens, particularly in dry regions, is the use of succulent plants as edging, as massed elements, or as large specimens. In some cases the only remaining plants on a deserted cottage site are giant agaves, or clumps of aloes. *Agave americana* 'Variegata' is a plant of such proportions when mature that it is generally overwhelming for present day small gardens.

Yucca filamentosa is a more manageable succulent which has a long history in Australian gardens both large and small. It is well-represented in nursery catalogues of the eighteen-fifties and sixties and is still found in many old gardens. Often, there are great clumps of aloes, those African plants with succulent spiky leaves typically banded, spotted or blotched with grey. *Aloe speciosa* with its orange flowers appears in the Handasyde, McMillan catalogue of 1867. *Cotyledon orbiculata* with succulent grey leaves, has flowers of a delicate pinkish-orange which suggest French art glass of the nineteen-twenties. It is listed in J.J. Rule's catalogue of 1857. While it is easily shared from garden to garden, it is not frost hardy and prefers some water in dry periods. The sempervivums enjoy the same warm and well-drained conditions. Some of the plants once listed as Sempervivum are now given the name *Aeonium*. The most common Sempervivum in early catalogues is the Roof Houseleek, *Sempervivum tectorum*. It has delicate clusters of rose-purple flowers on reddish stems and succulent leaves in rosettes. *Sedum acre* and *Sedum sieboldii* were just two of a long list of 'stonecrops' available in nineteenth century catalogues. They are very hardy and can live on sunbaked rocky banks or even on stone walls.

The Orange Ice-plant, *Lampranthus aurantiacus* is in Rule's 1855 catalogue. Being drought hardy and easily grown from cutting, the *Lampranthus* species found wide acceptance in Australian gardens. Of similar popularity, the *Echeverias* appear in catalogues from the eighteen-eighties. They have red or yellow flowers and spread in rosettes of succulent leaves. Given shelter from frosts, the *Lachenalias* will keep soldiering on even if neglected. *Lachenalia bulbiferum* is aptly called Soldier Boys and has orange flowers.



Lachenalia aloides is particularly well represented in catalogues of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Lachenalia aloides 'Quadricolor' listed in the 1877 catalogue of the Fulham Nursery at Colac, Victoria, offers as its name suggests, multi-coloured flowers with green, yellow, red and purple in bands on the one flower.

Typical remnant plants not yet mentioned include *Opuntia stricta*, the Prickly Pear. As a noxious species it is now mostly under control, but can still be seen spreading from old sites in Central Victoria. Ancient hedges of artemisia are seen in many areas, being wonderfully hardy low wind breaks. Traditionally it is used to border poultry runs as the plant is believed to deter lice.

Common Rosemary, *Rosmarinus officinalis* is usually to be found in old cottage gardens and is well to the fore in early catalogues. *Lavandula angustifolia* is, as expected, equally represented with *Lavandula stoechas* less common but seen in catalogues of the eighteen seventies and eighties. The latter is the 'Italian' lavender which has become a weed species in certain areas.

Many more plants could be listed and I am sure readers will think of others typically associated with cottage and smaller gardens. The important lesson for us all in regard to water conservation is that old gardens are full of hardy plants. Those in low rainfall areas are increasingly important models for the future.

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by CHRISTOPHER VERNON

Even the most carefully selected ever blooming garden creations, constantly nurtured and manured, fails to vie in beauty with the exquisite ligneous plant life, which, without attention, passes through drought, wind and storm, has no fear of the weeds, is always clean and bright, produces no litter, brings forth dainty flower and fruit in season and has no weedlike characteristics, rankness, burr, nettle, or thorn. It is to be hoped that these qualities will be appreciated before it is too late to take advantage of them for a private garden, for once the natural balance in the place has been upset, and foreign weeds allowed to dominate, the native growth is gone forever.

—Walter Burley Griffin (c.1935)

In his native United States of America, Walter Burley Griffin is remembered, if at all, as an obscure protégé of America's most celebrated architect Frank Lloyd Wright. In his adopted Australia, however, 'Burley Griffin' has received far greater professional and popular attention, stemming from his renown as the designer of its federal capital city, Canberra. Common to both nations is the perception of Griffin primarily as an architect and to a lesser extent as a town planner, a title he never utilised. This perception, however, is far too restrictive and varies significantly from fact: Griffin, in complement to architecture, was educated in and practised landscape architecture. Moreover, within this lesser-known context, Griffin advocated the use of Australian flora. Ultimately, the use and conservation of Australian flora was central to Griffin's vision for Australian national identity.

In acceptance of an invitation from the Commonwealth government to confer on his award winning Canberra design, Walter Burley Griffin made his first voyage to Australia in 1913. The day after his Sydney arrival on 19 August, the *Sydney Morning Herald* interviewed the designer of the 'new country's' capital. Discussion therein was not limited to Griffin's architecture and town planning, but also included his landscape architecture. Perhaps reflective of the relative obscurity of the profession in Australia, the reporter queried Griffin if 'landscape work' was amongst his 'hobbies'. Griffin replied in the affirmative and explained, politely correcting the reporter by inference, that landscape architecture was an 'art (author's emphasis) that is dragging along at the heels of architecture, but it is coming into its own'.

Griffin soon developed what would prove to be a deep and abiding passion for Australian flora. Griffin's response to it was first recorded in a 2 October 1913 interview, again in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. His response was an enthusiastically favourable one and is conveyed in the title itself: 'The Gum Tree. Mr. Griffin in Ecstacies (sic). The Poet's Ideal'. Therein, Griffin admonished (implicitly casting himself as an 'outsider'): 'The gum tree, instead of being one big continual monotony, has strongly appealed to me'; it 'ought to have a more dignified name'. Griffin's reference to the 'big continual monotony' of the gums suggests that he was aware that his favourable regard for them was not necessarily a popular one. As well as discerning their aesthetic appeal, Griffin also advocated their use in landscape design, assessing that 'no tree equals the eucalyptus

for embellishing the landscape'. He then asserted that 'the planting of foreign trees in place of the indigenous eucalypts is, to my way of thinking, a very great mistake'.

Commentary elsewhere in the interview suggests his initial interest and advocacy was not motivated by concern for 'ecological appropriateness'. Instead, the appeal of the gums was a profoundly aesthetic one: identifying them as 'decorator's trees', Griffin contended that their 'foliage is beautiful, and varies a great deal, its bark and twigs have a beauty all their own'. Most important was Griffin's assertion that 'foreign trees' were 'not so suitable' and 'not so beautiful'. Here Griffin's reference to 'suitability' was acknowledgment of a nascent, intuitive identification of the gums as being central to the visual character of the larger Australian landscape. For Griffin, the 'new' nation would be definitively shaped through the design articulation of its landscape.

Griffin's visit, about three months in duration, culminated in his appointment as Federal Capital Director of Design and Construction. Given six months leave of absence to settle his affairs in America, Griffin departed Australia on 15 November 1913.

On 12 May 1914, Griffin (along with Marion Mahony Griffin, his sister Genevieve and her architect husband Roy A. Lippincott) returned to Australia. Shortly after settling in Sydney, he furthered his interest in Australian flora. He now was joined in this pursuit by Mahony Griffin.

In August, Marion Mahony Griffin joined the Naturalists' Society of New South Wales; Walter in the following month. The Griffins' membership provided opportunity not only for organised bush-walking and field study but also facilitated their contact with the Australian scientific community, especially the botanists.

The Griffins supplemented the Society's organised excursions with their own, using 'every possible opportunity for learning the points of the wonderfully rich native flora, decorative, soil requirements, seasons of blooming, etc'. The Botanic Gardens at Sydney (and later Melbourne), 'through all seasons', became an early locus of their studies. Moreover, Mahony Griffin recollected that in 1914, 'Saturday was always kept free for walks in the outlying districts of Sydney, anything up to 20 miles, with [Constance] LePlastrier, the botanist, identifying trees and shrubs and flowers'. LePlastrier also brought 'Australia's best known botanists' to accompany the Griffins, including Alexander G. Hamilton and Edwin Cheel. Mahony Griffin explained that the botanists 'never resented the seven and eight hour lectures' Griffin solicited from them 'on relationships and soil conditions and habits'. 'By the end of the year', she believed that Griffin 'knew more than anyone in Australia of what was significant for a landscape architect'.

With his 'landscape questions' put to his botanist friends 'piling up' unanswered, Mahony Griffin reported that Griffin ultimately 'had to gather most all of the data necessary for native planting himself'. Whilst botanical texts were available, she explained that it was 'not possible to get much for landscape work from them', suggesting that Griffin's design attempts to utilise native flora also were somewhat experimental. However, the nature of Griffin's 'landscape questions' as well as the particular sort of information he found lacking in the available literature remain unclear.

Griffin's fascination with Australian flora found early design

application and expression in his 1914 town plan for Leeton, New South Wales in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. The *Irrigation Record* prefaced its publication of Griffin's Leeton plan and report by noting that Griffin had 'a very high opinion indeed of the decorative value of Australian flora, which, he thinks is all too little appreciated by Australians generally'.

Mahony Griffin also observed that many of the 'European invaders' had a real antipathy to (Australian) vegetation, so strange to them'. She later went so far as to typify popular Australian residential gardening as 'completely destroying all the natural growth and then putting in European plants'. Botanist LePlastrier also explained that it was a 'far too common tendency to look on our bush with British eyes, and finding there nothing like the homeland, to decry and condemn'. Alternatively, Mahony Griffin's reaction to the Australian flora, like her husband's, was a favourable one.

Decorative effect continued to be Griffin's essential rationale for the use of native plants in landscape design. Echoing sentiments expressed during his first Australian visit, he explained in his Leeton report that the reason why the 'Australian sylvia is unsurpassed for home embellishment' was owing to its aesthetic attributes, its 'open lacelike delicacy, half concealing, half revealing, also in its subtle and quiet colourings of bark and stem as well as foliage and often profuse flowering'. The Leeton town plan may have been the first design in which Griffin sought to utilise native vegetation.

In 1915, Griffin's botanical passion received design expression at Canberra with the preparation of a design for a 'Botanical Reserve', a national arboretum (perhaps partly informed by T.C.G. Weston's efforts at Yarralumla). The arboretum's systematic organisation by continents was at the suggestion of Griffin's bush-walking companion Edwin Cheel, thus evidencing the collaborative nature of Griffin's relations with the botanist. Cheel's advocacy of a continental or geographical classification scheme in itself is not unusual. However, Griffin's composition and arrangement of the continental representations is: intriguingly, their juxtaposition suggests his knowledge that the continents prehistorically were joined in a larger land mass, Gondwana Land. Griffin's arboretum design evoked this antique 'inter-connectedness', and is best seen as an attempt to symbolically imbue Canberra with a sense of 'permanence'.

Although the arboretum was not implemented, Australian flora would inform Griffin's Canberra design in a more profound way. That Griffin had begun to link native vegetation as being definitive and evocative of place, as initially alluded to in his 1913 newspaper interview, is confirmed by his 1916 selection of Australian flora botanical names as places names for suburb and streets in Canberra, such as Grevillea Place, Telopea Park, Clianthus Circle and Blandfordia.

In 1917, Griffin received an opportunity to comprehensively utilise native vegetation in landscape design. However, the genesis of the opportunity actually came two years earlier. In 1915 he was commissioned for the design of the buildings for the new 'Catholic College at the University of Melbourne'. In his architectural design submission, Griffin also included a 'plot plan' for the larger campus. In his report prepared to accompany the plans, Griffin again urged the planting of native flora, assessing that the 'Australian sylvia is unsurpassed for architectural embellishment'. The plan

delineated mass plantings and was organised with individual floral colours and combinations thereof, including 'orange, scarlet and yellow'; 'salmon and copper' and 'silver pink and blue'. Mahony Griffin explained that 'Griffin's method of planting together according to colour gave his plantings a splendour one rarely sees, for seasonal ensembles too'. The plan documents that his concern for the larger landscape environs was integral to his architectural vision and was simultaneously conceived. A year later, Griffin prepared a detailed design of his earlier schematic plan for the now named Newman College. Griffin responded with a remarkable garden design, one composed predominantly of native vegetation. Recorded on ten 50cm x 153cm Chinese scroll-like blue-prints, replete with vegetation individually identified by botanical name, the Newman College garden is perhaps one of the first examples of a native flora garden designed by a landscape architect in Australia (Griffin's interest in the native flora in this context predates that of the more celebrated Edna Walling).

Whilst Newman College 'was already on the boards', Mahony Griffin began what would prove to be a year-long project: compiling a list of native plants 'for use in any and all planting schemes(;) tabulated to show different growth requirements, as soil, moisture (etc); heights and shapes of growths; colour of flowers, foliage, berries and barks'. For this, she made a series of stunning botanical illustrations or studies.

Mahony Griffin shared not only Walter's passion for Australian flora, but also his advocacy of their use. For example, shortly after the Newman design, the 23 March 1918 *Australasian* reported that Mahony Griffin, too, 'emphasised the beauties of the Australian flora'. Beyond this aesthetic rationale, she asserted that use of native plants would result in 'maximum beauty', 'attained in the shortest time' and 'with the least expenditure'. Most important was her specificity in advocating that 'more, at least nine-tenths of native flora to one-tenth of foreign material' be used. As reflected in this remark, even in Australia, neither of the Griffins were purists in their advocacy of native plants. The Griffins' study of the Australian landscape soon led to their advocacy of its conservation and rehabilitation. Their increasing environmental consciousness culminated in their well-known conservation work at Castlecrag, begun in the 1920s and continued until Walter Griffin's 1935 departure for India (where he died in 1937, without returning to Australia).

Ultimately, Griffin (as did others) made explicit the crucial role native vegetation played in the distinctiveness of the Australian landscape. Writing in 1928, he asserted that the 'landscape gardener with appreciation for and equipped with the unique technique of Australian flora is the great desideratum for a legitimate art that can be distinctive of Australia and Australia alone. May he [sic] come before his medium is destroyed'.

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THE BOTANICAL ART OF MARY MORTON ALLPORT

by SALLYANN DAKIS



One evening as I was searching for my aged and single minded springer spaniel, I found myself in a forgotten corner of the grounds of a University College, directly opposite my own home, in Elboden Street South Hobart. Behind the asphalt carpark, in the shadows of mature oak and elm trees, I could see a lanky overgrown box hedge up to 2 metres high, and 10 metres long. Nearby was a stand of Yucca and in the protection of an obviously old, coppiced olive tree, two roses.

I was standing in the remnants of what had been a substantial early Tasmanian garden, created by arguably Australia's most important colonial 'lady painter'.

Mary Morton Allport lived in what was then Aldridge Lodge, a 5 acre property in a select district with views of Mount Wellington, the Derwent River, Sandy Bay and Hobart Town.

Leading art historian, and editor of the *Dictionary of Australian Artists* Joan Kerr, describes her thus: 'she is not only a perfect representative of the colonial lady painter but, in my opinion, the most important artist amongst the earliest manifestations of this species in Australia'.

With the obligatory white gloves on, I've gingerly perused the surviving work of Mary Morton Allport which is collected in the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Art, part of the State Library of Tasmania, created thanks to a generous bequest by Mary's great grandson Henry Allport. To say she was a versatile artist is an understatement, she was the first woman in the colony to produce etchings, engravings and lithographs, she was also a talented miniaturist, sketcher and painter. Her subjects include landscapes, flowers, natural history studies and portrait miniatures.

Geoffrey Stilwell who was in charge of the Allport collection for just on three decades has an intimate knowledge

of the Allport family. 'It was in such detailed and correct studies of Tasmanian flowers and insects that Mary Morton Allport excelled... Her landscape sketches and watercolours show an unusual affinity for the local environment, including a particular affection for the eucalypt.'

Mary Morton Allport was much more than an amateur artist, the school she attended in Staffordshire had a strong artistic bias, John Glover was once a drawing master there. Interestingly, one of Mary's better known works is a portrait of John Glover, painted in Tasmania in watercolour on ivory in 1858 with a backdrop of eucalypts.

Unlike another now better known Tasmanian artist Louisa Anne Meredith, Mary Morton Allport did not have a financial imperative to seek artistic commissions, to paint, draw or to publish, except in her early days. She exhibited or published relatively little of her work in her own time, although probably her major work, a chess table with sixty-four painted panels, each depicting native flowers of Tasmania was shown in the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1855. (It has not been located.)

Its an interesting question to ponder, had Mary not been 'comfortably off' perhaps her work would have received the broader recognition it deserves?

In addition to her other accomplishments, Mary was also a diarist, it's her private journals that I find at times movingly intimate, and they manage to bring her back to life. In particular a journal she wrote in 1852 for her son Morton whilst

he was in England has many references to her all important family (and their preoccupation with their health, incessant attacks of influenza and a chronicle of home remedies including belladonna, leeches, and mustard poultices), games of Muff Whist, Fox & Goose, Bagatelle and Ecarté, dances of quadrilles and polkas, her art, and the garden.

An unsigned drawing of the house in 1833, eight years before the Allports bought it, shows the house set in an open area dotted with small trees and shrubs planted as specimens, bordered by a post and rail fence. Twenty years later, it is apparent from Mary's journal that the garden was something special in the colony and draw card for visitors:

5th March 1852 I took the Butterworth's down the garden, where like every one else, they exalted our fruit above all the island, specially a new seedling peach...

30th March 1852 Gathering Walnuts, and sewing. At half past twelve Mrs Compton and her mother came. We gave them some fruit and wine and took them round the garden...Then came Mr and Mrs Douglas Kilburn, and I had to go round the garden with them. He said there was a very good living to be made out of it, and supposed there were thousands of bushels of fruit.

The garden appears unusually large and productive for a domestic residence, in the year of the diary it produced 700 pounds worth of produce, in addition to the copious quantities Mary dried, pickled, preserved or gave to ailing friends, the Sunday School and acquaintances. The produce was entered,





and won many prizes in local flower and fruit exhibitions.

18th March Sent away twelve pounds (of) filberts and a thousand walnuts; half the crop had disappeared from the tree by the willow. Robie Pitcairn and Paton [sic] Jones came for fruit I promised. I sent white and black nectarines, english peaches, walnuts, pears, ribstones and St Laurences...

Of the plants she talks about, most are fruit and vegetables rather than ornamental but native plants rate a mention. Within the first week of the journal Mary reports 'Papa cut a splendid Waratah in the Valley', and in one of her more emotional entries, she describes her distress when she discovers a group of eucalypts being cut down.

27th July I went into the valley this morning to see the men cutting down the bank, but I had better have staid away I was so vexed. The pretty blue gums from Grass-tree hill, which were planted on purpose to hide that ugly fence by the hot beds, had just grown high enough to make that place an ornament instead of an eye-sore, and Papa had them cut down before my eyes, while I begged their lives in vain...

28th July... Papa says he will plant a Sterculia to hide the end of the ugly fence, but nothing in the world is so graceful as the whitey-blue gums, except the English Birch, and that has not the lovely colour...

There appears to have been three discrete areas of the garden, the upper orchard, where there were fruit trees and vegetables, the 'shrubberies' and formal front garden with box hedges, and what was called 'the Valley'. Here, along the Sandy Bay Rivulet some serious vegetable production was undertaken, once washed away with some of the bank, in a heavy downpour. This area is now part of suburban Sandy Bay, but may well have been covered in part by native bush.

Above: The home of Mory Morton Allport, Aldridge Lodge, in 1871.

Left below: Mory Morton Allport – Self Portrait miniature on ivory.

Left above: Mory Morton Allport – Miniature *Tosmonion* Wildflowers on ivory.

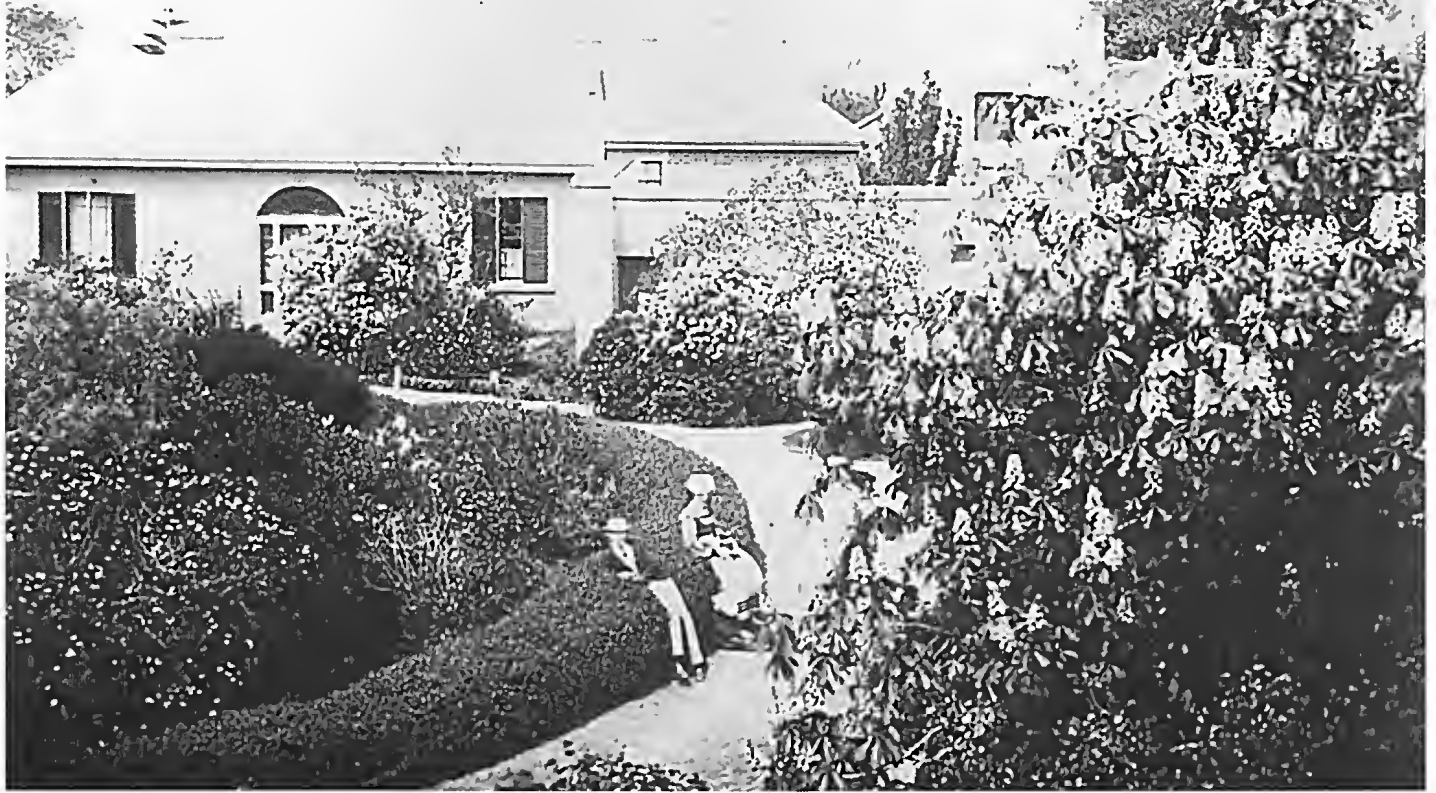
21st July In the evening walked in the garden, and discovered how the valley ought to be cleared of trees and walks, and laid out in beds sweeping across, the only walks being at the edges, close to the brook and under the bill.

In the background to a miniature Mary painted in the garden is a rose arbour, possibly also in the valley.

From Aldridge Lodge Mary Morton Allport would have had a birds eye view of the Derwent River (which today it is rather more closed in), and frequent references are made in the journal to shipping movements, and exchanges of seeds were mentioned (new currant and gooseberry seeds, while she sent apples to Norfolk Island, Filbert seeds and dried plants abroad).

Geoffrey Stilwell recalls an interesting story behind the planting of a Cedar of Lebanon tree in the garden. A family friend from Hobart, Alfred Henry Manning visited the Allport family home, Cedar Court, Aldridge in Staffordshire, where he was given some seeds of the Cedar of Lebanon. By the time they reached Capetown three germinated, and he put them into a potato. When he arrived home, one was planted at Aldridge Lodge, one at their former home, Faire Knowe in Upper Liverpool Street and the other at his own home, The Gables in Sandy Bay. Today, only one survives, at The Gables, which has now been renamed Cedar Court.

There are references to at least two gardeners, Hill and Hollingsdale, but its unclear whether they worked full time in the garden, and it appears the garden staff were not entirely trouble free!



17th Sept Met Mr Fraser at his own gate who had been to call on us, he walked back with me to look at the hyacinths, which are lovely, but only one of the dark purple dutch, has appeared. The gardeners want their wages raised again, and were all more or less drunk, Joe in particular; Papa quite low spirited; I should like to try the effect of giving them all the congé except Hill, who is the only one worth his salt – as we succeeded in getting a clerk, it seems much more natural to get gardeners from the diggins.

Unfortunately from a horticultural perspective, there are few references to 'garden technology' or the daily rituals of the gardeners, she mentions a 'hot bed', and the grafting of a Cloth of Gold Rose, but in an earlier journal when they lived in Upper Liverpool Street, she talks about Joseph 'returning from town loaded with cabbage plants and grafts from the Government garden'.

I was doubly delighted to see this connection. The Government garden (now the Botanical Gardens) was used, like most others, as a source of entry and proving grounds for new plants for the colony as well as propagating a range of indigenous plants.

My own home, 'Manilla', opposite Aldridge Lodge, was built in 1831 by the first superintendent of the gardens and an intriguing horticultural identity, William Davidson, who established a substantial garden and productive orchard at 3 Elboden Street.

In 1968 the Commonwealth demolished a substantially altered Aldridge Lodge (in spite of some public objections), and built Jane Franklin Hall as a University residential college. Today there are but a few reminders of the garden, a magnificent but lone Walnut tree stands on the edge of what must

have been the upper orchard, a few as yet unnamed roses may well date from the earlier garden, as must the Yuccas, olive and the overgrown box hedge. In recreating my own garden, I have taken cuttings from this hedge, and think perhaps, that part of this horticultural heritage lives on...

Above: Aldridge Lodge 1870. The figures are Mory Morton Allport's grandchildren, Cecil (Morton John Allport) and Minnie (Mary Marguerite Allport).

All illustrations (including front cover Worotoh watercolour) are from the Allport Collection, Stote Library of Tasmania.

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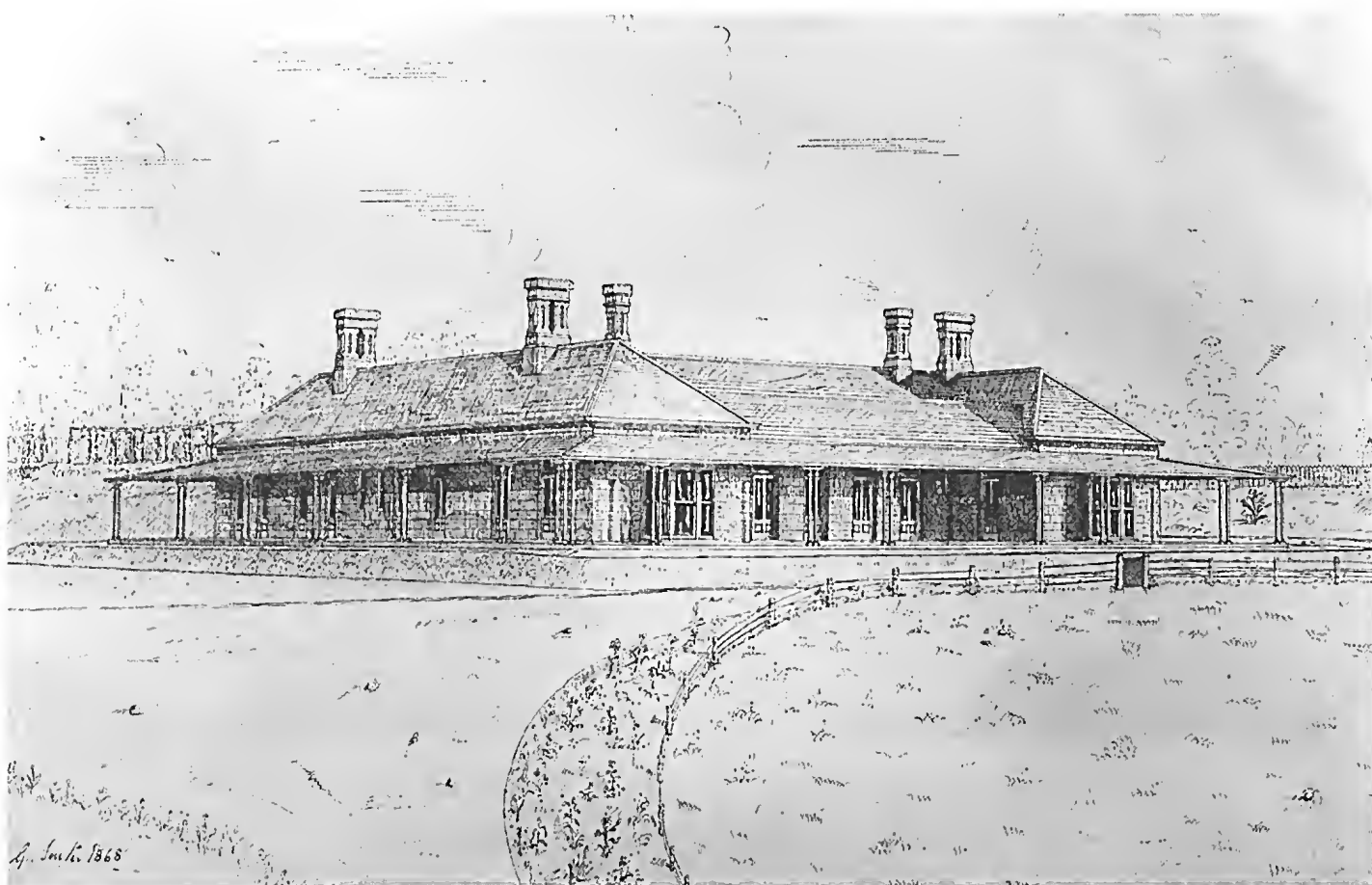
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I would like to thank the staff of the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts for their help in researching this article, and the former Curator of the collection, Geoffrey Stilwell.

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EAST TALGAI STATION, DARLING DOWNS, QUEENSLAND

by BRIAN RANDALL



East Talgai, Richard George Suter, architect 1868. 468 x 295mm. At the time of construction showing the gardens at the beginnings of establishment.

In 1994 the John Oxley Library received by way of donation a gardening register which recorded information about the gardens of East Talgai station situated in the eastern Darling Downs area of Queensland, close to Warwick. East Talgai station is one of the surviving grand station homesteads and its history has been greatly enhanced by the donation of this interesting and, to some extent, unique gardening register.

The homestead dates from 1868 when Richard George Suter was commissioned by George John Edwin Clark MLA to design and build a residence on East Talgai station and it appears the building of the homestead took some two years. The house as it stands today is a large U-shaped, single storeyed building of some 164 squares, constructed of sandstone and surrounded by wide open verandahs. The sandstone used in construction was quarried on the property being transported to the site by dray.

Thought was given to the homestead gardens at an early stage. It was seen as important to create an element of splendour by having spacious lawns, orchards, gardens and English trees with the aim of establishing a 'small oasis in an otherwise empty brown and dusty summer landscape'. The effort devoted to the establishment of the homestead gardens is recorded today in what has become known as the

East Talgai garden book. This register is a manuscript notebook dating from 1868 which, as mentioned previously, was

donated to the John Oxley Library in 1994. It is an invaluable record of the extensive planting which took place at East Talgai including a wide variety of vines, trees, flowers, shrubs and other plants.

The garden book contains entries under the following headings;

Vines	Oranges	Plums
Lemons	Mulberries	Quinces
Roses	Persimmons	Apples
Almonds	Camellias	Conifers
Figs	Trees and Shrubs	Pears
Creepers	Peaches	Chrysanthemums
Apricots	Nectarines	

For each heading the following specific information is then recorded;

- Number of entry
- Date planted
- Remarks
- Name or variety of plant
- Number planted

Far left: East Talgai 235 x 155mm watercolour – Playing craquet in the garden. (Courtesy B. Lord)



The purpose of the book appears to have been to record what was being planted, when plantings were undertaken as well as how each variety fared. The book also clearly demonstrates that there was a concerted effort to lay down extensive gardens and orchards whilst the homestead was in the actual course of construction. An 1874 plan of East Talgai homestead confirms the importance of the gardens in relation to the homestead itself, with gardens shown on all four sides of the building.

The gardening book itself spans a period from 1868-1941. Research to date has failed to conclusively identify who commenced the book although it may have been the homestead gardener. Records were kept more carefully in the earlier period up to approximately the mid 1880s. Later entries, although at times quite detailed, do not record activity over time. Rather, later entries seem to be more focused on recording plants in individual beds as well as replanting and maintenance. Later entries are in a number of different hands but, as with the earlier entries, it is unclear who actually undertook the recordings. These later entries are not in general as detailed or complete as the earlier entries and do not convey the totality of the East Talgai gardens in the way that the initial twenty years of recordings do so effectively.

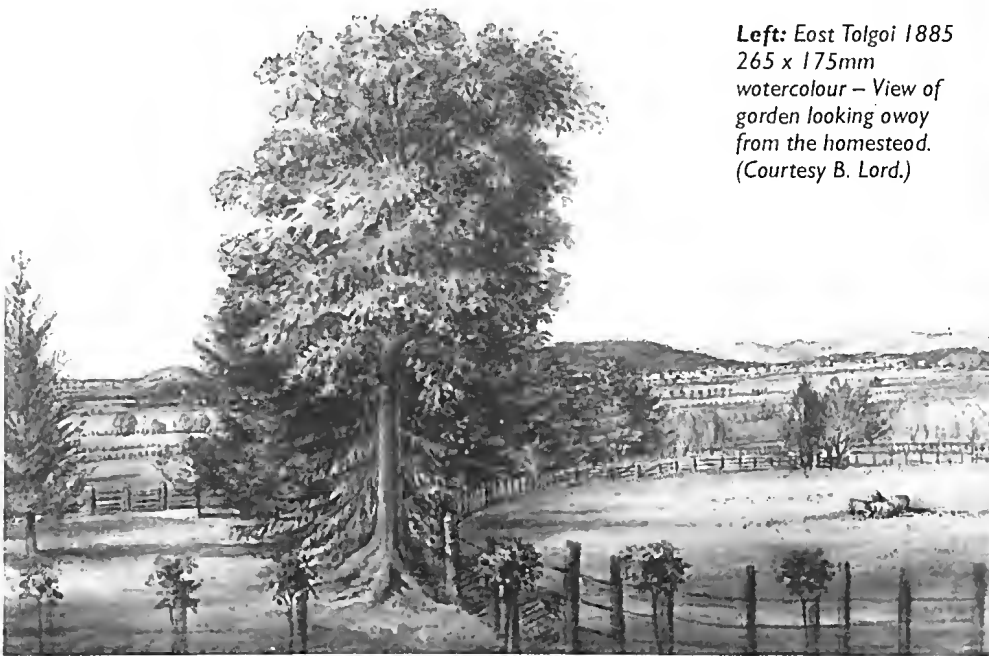
The station stores register for the period 19 May 1866 to 26 September 1868 survives and is also in the Library's collection. Three gardeners are mentioned as receiving rations during the following periods:

19 May 1866 to 28 July 1866	Mr Tighe
15 December 1866 to 16 May 1868	Mr Thyle
25 July 1868 to 26 September 1868	Mr McEnnis

It is unclear whether Mr McEnnis remained as gardener during the period of construction of the East Talgai homestead nor does the ration book record the extent of work undertaken by these early gardeners.

The evidence provided by the gardening book is augmented by a variety of pictorial material both within the photographic collection of the John Oxley Library as well as through the watercolours painted by Mary Suter, the wife of R. Geo Suter, the original architect of East Talgai. These are not held by the Library but are wonderfully represented in the recent publication *East Talgai and its Environs, 1868-1885: A Series of Water Colours by Mary Handfield Suter, Wife of R. Geo. Suter – architect of 'East Talgai'*. Taken together it is possible to reconstruct a clear representation of the gardens as they appeared, certainly during the early period during and following the completion of the homestead. Many of the plants recorded in the gardening register survive, in particular the vines as well as the Bunya pines which dominate the rear of the homestead building.

The importance of these surviving records is perhaps best seen in comparison to another significant collection at the John Oxley Library, that being the surviving records of Glengallon Station which is situated a short distance from East Talgai Station. These records are predominantly commercial in nature and although of great historical interest do not portray the station and its surrounds in such a direct and visual manner. For this reason the surviving East Talgai material, although limited in extent, allows us a rare glimpse of a magnificent early homestead.



Left: East Tolgoi 1885
265 x 175mm
watercolour – View of
garden looking away
from the homestead.
(Courtesy B. Lord.)



East Tolgoi 1885 272 x
183mm watercolour.
Circular drive and well
established conifers. Vines
are also evident at
the front of the building.
(Courtesy B. Lord.)

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BRIAN RANDALL previously worked in the private sector for many years, coming to the John Oxley Library as Manuscripts Librarian in early 1994. He is presently Manager of the John Oxley Library.

I was very interested in the article and photograph on p.28 of the Jan/Feb 1997 issue of *Australian Garden History*. The rose described is very like one I grow that has been handed down in my family for several generations, always known as my grandmother's favourite rose. It is very easy to grow from cuttings and has been continued partly out of sentiment and partly because it is a particularly good rose.

The rose has repeated prolific flushes of bloom from October to the end of May and is sweetly scented. The buds are rather pointed and the outside of the petals are a deeper pink than the inside. The petals start curling back to show its pale surface while the flower is in bud, and when fully open this curling back is a distinctive feature. The petals often have a rather crumpled texture, very similar to that shown in the illustration in the journal. The stamens are quite frequently concealed by crowded central petals, but when exposed are a handsome bright gold. The leaves are quite large and round, the new growth is red and the reddish tinge remains in the older leaves. The thorns are large and savage, as is frequent in Alister Clark roses. In short, I think that my grandmother's favourite rose may have been *The Lady Medallist*.

My grandmother and her husband were acquainted with the Alister Clarks and were visitors to Glenara. The family came from Ayrshire as did Alister Clark but there was no family connection, at least in the two hundred years for which we have records.

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17TH CENTURY PLANTS

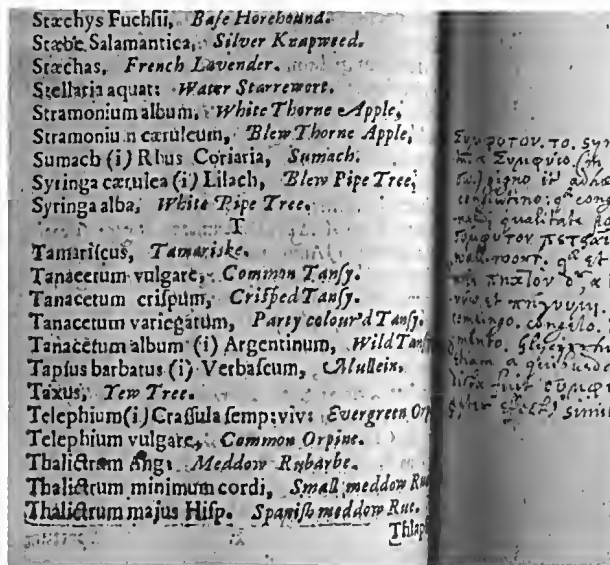
THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
BOTANIC GARDEN

by TIMOTHY WALKER

The Oxford Botanic Garden was founded in 1621 as the Oxford *Physic* Garden and is the oldest botanic garden in Britain. In common with all gardens of this age it has evolved and changed in the past 376 years; very few gardens can be preserved without stagnating. The mission of the Garden has always been 'to promote learning and glorify the works of God' and the plants in the Garden reflect the contemporary teaching and research interests. This means that the plants grown in the Garden have had to earn a place since we do not have the room to grow every species.

The collection now contains about 8,000 taxa representing more than 250 families of plants. Since this collection is held in a garden of two hectares this is the most diverse yet compact collection of plants in the world. There is no other two hectares like it and the Garden is a highly concentrated

there is no such
thing as new
garden plants
just new
gardeners...



piece of biological diversity. One way in which botanic gardens differ from ornamental gardens is that the plants are grown for more than their aesthetic appeal. Every botanic garden has a formally stated accession policy (and reaccession policy) to ensure that irrelevant plants are not given valuable garden space. The plants in the garden are then catalogued, enabling curatorial staff to check that they are building a collection suited to the fulfilment of the mission of the garden.

These catalogues are not only essential to the efficient running of the Garden but they also provide garden historians with a 'snapshot' of the garden in question on one day in the past. As I have already stated, all gardens change and evolve, and it is a very safe bet that all garden catalogues are out of date before the list supplied to the printer can be published. However this must not be used as an excuse for not producing complete lists. Future students of garden history will need to know what was grown when, where and by whom.

In 1648, the first catalogue of plants grown in the Garden was written by Jacob Bobart, the first *Horti Praefec-*

tus. Bobart had arrived at the Garden just six years earlier and hence started work just as the English Civil War broke out. Oxford was intimately involved in the War, albeit coming a poor second. The list has two sections. The first is an alphabetically arranged list of the Latin names, with their Oxfordshire names alongside. The second section is the reverse with the common names being placed first. Any modern garden cataloguer would not even consider including local names, but this was before the ground breaking work of Linnaeus. The inclusion of the vernacular names has been very useful when deciding to which species the Latin name refers. The majority of the 1,500 species in the catalogue are still being grown at the Garden and at least one of the plants listed is still alive, one of a pair of English yew trees near the south of the Walled Garden.

In 1993, the Garden was bequeathed an original copy of the 1648 catalogue by Henry Scholick. Mr Scholick had been a director of Blackwell's Bookshop and left the book to the Botanic Garden, rather than the Bodleian Library, because he 'wanted people to see the book', demonstrating an interest-

ing view of the role of librarians. Obviously we are very careful with the preservation of the book from fire, theft and other destructive forces but we do try to show the book to as many people as possible since here is a tangible link with the past. The donation of the book was a catalyst to the redevelopment of a border in the Garden to show some of the plants from the list, proving that there is no such thing as new garden plants just new gardeners. The plants are labelled with four names; the 1648 Latin and Oxfordshire names and the 1993 Latin and Oxfordshire names. In many cases the Latin names have altered more than the local names.

This new collection is a very useful tool when teaching undergraduates of the intricacies of plant nomenclature and

classification. However the collection is used not only for the teaching of undergraduates but also in our public and school education programmes. The 1648 collection is a wonderful way of impressing on students and gardeners of all ages the need for uniformity in plant nomenclature and the reasons for using Latin.

For 376 years the University of Oxford Botanic Garden has been in a state of change but this evolution has always been in order to provide a better teaching collection. This 1648 collection has provided not only an insight into 17th century gardening, but also a valuable new teaching resource.

To celebrate the 350th anniversary of the publication of our first list, we hope to publish an up to date catalogue in 1998 complete with a facsimile of the original list.

TIMOTHY WALKER has been the *Horti Praefectus* at the University of Oxford Botanic Garden since 1988. He claims to be a bigeneric hybrid botanist/gardener, having read Botany at Oxford and trained as a gardener at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and the Savill Garden at Windsor.

A LANDSCAPE OF TREES: 1824-1996

by MARGARET HENDRY

Little did the naval surgeon, Dr Charles Throsby, realise his exploration the previous year of the Murrumbidgee River would result in such dramatic changes to the Molongolo landscape. His article in the *Australian Magazine* (June 1821), describing 'Extensive meadow of rich land on either side of the river', acted as the catalyst for others. Imagine the amazement of these mid 1820s squatters and land grant settlers to learn that Canberra is now home to three hundred thousand people and millions of trees. The open grassland valleys bounded by bush and forest covered hills have changed from grazing land to a National Capital City.

No longer is the remark 'a good sheep paddock spoiled' nor the comments of the writer in the London journal *Punch*, who wrote

'Londoners' may be all too aware of the disadvantages of living in a city without a plan, but these cannot be compared with the rival disadvantages of living in a plan without a city.' Today, Canberra is a city of distinction and great beauty because of its plan.

Based on earlier northern European ideas, the underlying planning theory for Canberra has recently become more sympathetic to cultural differences and the diversity of Australian climatic conditions. The Beautiful and Garden City, leasehold land tenure and town planning theories of the late 19th century became the foundation of Canberra's planning. Today, Canberra has become an exercise in urban theory incorporating ideas from the environmental movement and the need for conservation.

Earlier attitudes towards trees resulted in the felling of these and large areas of the Australian forests. This became an inherent part of the Australian image of progress. From the time of settlement of the Monaro, the early settlers cut down indigenous trees to establish grazing and river flat farming. Around their homestead they introduced the familiar trees of the northern hemisphere. Soon most gardens around each home contained a cluster of oaks, elms and pines. The pattern was cast.

During this time the landscape changed dramatically. The settlers cut down the trees and planted deciduous species especially around their homes. A farmer and church warden at St. John's Church Reid, Edwin Bambridge, brought willow slips to Canberra taken from a tree at the Cowpastures near Camden (NSW). The original cuttings came from beside Napoleon's grave on St. Helena, a port of call for ships enroute to New South Wales. During the voyage these remained viable by keeping them in a sack of potatoes. Later the willows lined the river banks from Duntroon to Yarralumla becoming a feature of Canberra's waterways.

In 1840 the Canberra hills were still bushland. Within the next eighty years this changed dramatically through the closer settlement of small holdings. This resulted from the 1861 Robertson Land Act, and amended fourteen years later. In the early 1920s a timber inspector for the new Federal Capital expressed concern about the poor condition of Majura and recorded only a few trees. Mt Majura contained a variety of

small block settlements taken up by family groups.

Many free selection farms before 1875 were twelve times smaller than the minimum established after that time. Within thirty years horses outnumbered people, cattle by seven times and one hundred and thirty times more sheep plus the rabbit. Imagine the effect of all this, and the inevitable loss of trees that took place!

Even greater changes took place. Sixteen years after the amendment to the Robertson Land Act, the National Association Convention of 1891 passed a resolution, which triggered the move towards Federation. After 1901 a diligent search for a site for the Federal Capital took place. Followed by the launching of an international design competition for a city designed on the ideals of the Garden City. The 1912 winning design embraced the landscape as a design element. For the first time a landscape architect and architect, Walter Burley Griffin, focused on the landscape.

As design is an evolutionary process, it is easy to imagine the changes over time to this ideal. The original design provided for twelve times less people than in Canberra today.

*Imagine the amazement of these
mid-1820s squatters and land grant
settlers to learn that Canberra is now home
to three hundred thousand people and
millions of trees.*

Every change of administration has modified the form and structure of the city. Griffins' idea of using the topographic features as essential components of his design is still evident, even after two major setbacks, World War Two and the thirty's Depression. This shows the strength of his design.

Shortly after the competition, the Administrator for the National Capital, David Miller, appointed T.C.G. Weston (known as Charles Weston) as the Officer-In-charge of Afforestation in 1913. Two years earlier, he had invited Weston to visit Canberra to report on a site to establish a plant nursery at Acton. The following year, Miller obtained approval to establish this and asked Weston to act as a supervisor.

From 1913, he became responsible for the selection of tree species and their subsequent planting during the next thirteen years. As a British trained horticulturist, Weston worked earlier for ten years (1898-1908) as Head Gardener at Admiralty House in Sydney. Later he played a major role in the landscape development of early Canberra. Many of the trees he planted became shelter belts to reduce the impact of the cold prevailing winter winds. Weston set out to find suitable plant species to grow in Canberra. He visited various centres including Melbourne and Ballarat to inspect street

trees, then established trials to test them.

While in Canberra, Weston engaged in a continuing correspondence with botanist Joseph Maiden, the Director of the Sydney Botanic Gardens. Maiden sent 487 trees and a variety of other plants with the comment, 'such native trees and shrubs as are likely to prove suitable for the climate of the proposed Federal Capital.' Weston continued to experiment with suitable species and by 1917 concluded 'that *Cedrus deodara*, *C. atlantica* and *C. libani* would form the chief arboreal feature of Canberra. They are notoriously long lived and indifferent to extremes of hot and cold.' These species represent the major planting in Reid, Manuka, Barton and feature in the Parliamentary Zone.

Even then, all street trees required the approval of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee. By August 1921 the planting of 17,000 trees took place, but less than one fifth were Australian species. Early in 1923, Weston submitted a schedule of proposed tree planting in the city areas. For the next four years a major programme of planting took place including many central suburbs and Prospect Parkway, now known as Anzac Parade.

In 1923 the construction of the Provisional Parliament House began. Within two years this programme included major tree planting in association with the House. These trees formed the structural planting. They included Cedars, Cypress and Lombardy Poplars for the opening in 1927.

During the winter of 1926 until the following winter, members of many organisations visiting Canberra planted trees. This represented twenty-five years after federation, hence the interest in this earlier completion date. At least thirteen organisations carried out tree planting ceremonies. These included:

- The Institute of Accountants ..
- The Town Planning Association
- Institute of Engineers
- Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce
- The Millions Club of NSW
- Highland Society
- The NSW Golf Council
- The Press Association of NZ
- English Speaking Union
- The Empire Parliamentary Association
- The Young Australia League
- The Commercial Travellers Association.

In October 1926, a delegation of the Empire Parliamentary Association visited the new Parliament House. To mark this occasion, members of the delegation planted an avenue of *Cupressus sempervirens* in front of and at right angles to the House. These trees each have a plaque giving details about the person who planted them. Arthur Henderson, the Home Secretary in the first British Labour Government planted one of the two Lombardy Poplars in the Senate courtyard and the Marquis of Salisbury the other. Later after the Opening of the House, the Duke of York planted a *Cedrus libani*, the Cedar of Lebanon, at Government House and other trees. The Duchess planted a coppice of *Salix alba* 'Caerulea', the Cricket Bat Willow and *Eucalyptus rubida*, the Candle Bark.

In the twenties Weston planted trees using conifers as the dominant species near the lake at Regatta Point. He also

planted large areas at Weston Park. Little other major planting took place in the thirties. Forester Lindsay Pryor's appointment as Superintendent of Parks and Gardens in 1944, enabled him to carry out further major tree planting, especially the western sector of Commonwealth Park. He increased this during following decade. Conifers formed the major part of this planting supplemented with other groups of deciduous and broad leafed evergreen trees.

Pryor used a wide range of both exotic and Australian trees and shrubs and set aside land to trial tree species in selected areas of Canberra. In the early fifties, he planted the southern section of Green Hills opposite Government House. Weston had previously planted 42,800 *Cedrus deodara* and *C. libani*; 16,300 *C. atlantica* and 9,000 *Cupressus sempervirens* 'Stricta' on Green Hills. Pryor left his mark on Canberra with the increased use of Australian trees.

In 1954 Prime Minister Menzies instigated investigations into ways to stimulate Canberra's growth. The following year, a Select Senate Committee of Inquiry reported on the development of Canberra. They urged the planting of more trees from 1955 on. With the creation of the National Capital Development Commission three years later, the landscape development of Canberra became an important element in the Commission's strategy.

From its inception, the policy included landscape components in all the site development of Canberra. This period included the greatest volume and variety of landscape projects undertaken anywhere in the world. In addition, the Commission sought guidance from designers of great distinction, including Lord Holford and Dame Sylvia Crowe.

William Holford and Partners prepared a report on Canberra, recommending the retention of a predominantly Australian character around Lake Burley Griffin. The report recommended the dramatic clustering of autumn coloured, foliage trees and small enclosures composed of massed groupings of flowering trees and shrubs. In contrast elms planted in formal rows along both Kings and Commonwealth Avenues strengthened this composition. Around the lake, a variety of tree species created the main divisions. This report emphasised the need to use the olive, grey greens and browns of the local landscape. Later it led to the search for a distinctly Australian landscape character for the large scale development of the parkland and the New Towns.

During this period, the Commission commenced the construction of the first new town of Woden, which provided the opportunity for new landscapes to develop a more Australian character. Richard Clough introduced eucalypts and wattles into the broad scale public lands. He used forestry methods to integrate these larger compositions into the general landscape. This reduced the defining effect of the boundaries, especially between residential areas, open spaces and the hills and valleys.

Outrider trees softened the boundaries of existing pine forests associated with residential areas. A selection of deciduous and northern hemisphere evergreen trees created a distinctive landscape in the valleys. The climate of the windswept Woden Valley improved with the introduction of wind breaks and visual screening.

Large scale forestry planting influenced the pattern of the open space reservations. These became horse riding and bush

walking trails. Eucalypts and wattles helped to maintain scale and continuity within these landscapes, linking them visually to the surrounding hills.

The experience gained in Woden influenced the future mass tree planting in Belconnen and Tuggeranong, and its adaptation to act as roadside buffers. The rapid development of Woden did not allow for any programme of forward planting to take place. In later new towns, the planting of shelter belts and forward planting preceded their construction. These provided for shelter and structural landscape divisions on a district basis within the new towns.

Low hills and ridges formed the basis of the neighbourhoods in the planning of Woden. This gave it a distinct landscape character and helped to retain the bushland tree cover on many hilltops. Generous tree planting within each neighbourhood supported by the free distribution of trees and shrubs to each household added to the landscape setting.

Eucalypts provided the dominant character with other deciduous species of trees highlighting a different character in each neighbourhood. Some had a dominance of elm and others ash. In other neighbourhoods nearest to Mt. Taylor, especially Torrens and Farrer the eucalypts dominated.

All small local parks and pedestrian ways contained horticultural varieties of trees, including groves of flowering cherries, red oaks, liquidambers and silver birch. The aim sought to strengthen the autumn and spring theme already established in Canberra.

A different street tree pattern evolved departing from the repeated avenue approach using a single species. Richard Clough introduced a greater variety of trees into the street scene. These varied in mature height and placement allowing for summer shade and winter sunshine, and the retention of traffic sight-lines at each street corner. The formal avenue planting along the distributor roads remained but the neighbourhood pattern of roads followed this new procedure. A reduction in the emphasis on the road pattern helped to create a park setting for the houses. Similar trees to those used in each garden helped to merge the verge with the general street scene.

Belconnen and Tuggeranong followed the pattern established in Woden. The variation in Belconnen resulted from the remaining trees from the many homestead gardens. The typical early settlers plantings included oaks, elms and pines. The location of pedestrian laneways, parks and playing fields provided a means to include these in the design. This allowed the trees to remain in public ownership to enable maintenance and prevent removal by the householder. The design of the Aranda playing fields included many existing elms.

Another playing field in Aranda located on the edge of the Black Mountain dry sclerophyll forest included indigenous

tree species. These planted close together in groups of three in the verge helped to blend it into the bushland setting. In addition different eucalypt species used on either side of the north-south dividing ridge empathised a local change in the vegetation. The ridge through the centre of the neighbourhood formed a link park and walkway. This provided land for the retention of the existing trees.

Canberra is still developing its own special landscape character. Today, millions of trees form the fabric of its composition, a city of trees. It's unique landscape results from the skills and enthusiasm of many people. They caught the vision of what Canberra might become – a beautiful city of trees and a national capital to enjoy.



Weston's planting –
Cedrus atlantica and *C. deodora*
in Commonwealth Avenue.

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MARGARET HENDRY is one of the opening speakers at the National AGHS Conference in Canberra in April and will be speaking on 'Plants and People, A Slice of History – Seventy years at the Centre of the Nation'.

WILLIAM HENRY ELLIOTT

HORTICULTURIST, NURSERY PROPRIETOR,
EDITOR AND AUTHOR

by RICHARD AITKEN



William Elliott may not be as familiar to Australian garden historians as those other Williams who dominated our nineteenth century horticulture – Guilfoyle and Sangster – nor possibly even as well known as his namesake, Melbourne University gardener Alexander Elliott, but recent research points to his major and largely unsung role as a promoter of Victorian horticulture.

William Henry Elliott was born about 1826 and his early history is likely to mirror scores of his contemporaries: British born and lured to Australia in the wake of the 1850s gold rushes. The only possible evidence of his early career was a report of Regent's Park Gardeners' Society in London when the *Gardeners Chronicle* (8 May 1847) noted: 'The Prize Essay (for which there were two competitors), on the Principles of Grouping Colours in Flower Gardens, illustrated by a plan, was read and discussed. The prize of £1 was awarded to Mr W. Elliot, of Pine-apple Nursery'. (In a previous notice of attendance at a meeting of the same society, Elliott was spelt with a double t.) On its own this is rather flimsy evidence of our precocious 21 year old being in London, but in 1843 a 'Mr M. Guilfoyle' was a committee member of the Regent's Park Gardener's Society for Mutual Improvement (to quote the full name) and in 1844 'Mr C. Moore' led a discussion on plant morphology (in support of the theories proposed in Dr John Linley's *Outline of Botany*) at one of the Society's meetings. Is it too much to suggest that these two members were Michael Guilfoyle (at that date father of 3 year old William) and Charles Moore, both to soon emigrate and carve important niches in colonial horticulture? If so, was the Regent's Park Gardeners Society a London breeding ground for colonial emigrants and was Elliott influenced in his decision to emigrate by Moore's 1847 appointment (on the recommendation of Linley) as Director of the Sydney Botanic Gardens? This is all supposition, but maybe an AGHS member with a week to spare in London may be able to confirm these tantalising leads.

The next we hear of Elliott is in 1859 when 'W. Elliott' was noted by Withers in his *History of Ballarat* (1887) as a founding member of the Ballarat Horticultural Society and a member of first committee. Again, this may not be our boy, but in 1860 well-known Ballarat nursery proprietor Thomas Lang intimated in a newspaper advertisement that William Elliott of the Creswick Nursery had become a partner.

In October 1860 'Wm Elliott, Nurseryman, Ballarat' was elected as a corresponding member of the recently-formed Victorian Gardeners' Mutual Improvement Society (after 1862 known as the Victorian Horticultural Improvement Society). Elliott's election was doubtless aided by his links with Lang, and his strong duo of supporters: his proposer being the energetic and ambitious Josiah Mitchell (inaugural president of the society and a gardener with extensive British experience) and his seconder being William Hyndman,

gardener at the University and confidant of Mueller (having supplied a long list of conifers in an 1858 Mueller paper on planting). An indication of the depth of Elliott's experience may be gauged by the qualifications set out for a corresponding member: 'gardeners and amateurs of acknowledged ability, who may be elected without an annual subscription...but take no part in the business of the society unless by payment of an annual subscription'. Elliott was also elected a member of the rival Horticultural Society of Victoria in September 1871, but played little part in the activities of either society. Late in 1871 'W. Elliott (of Messrs T. Lang and Co.)' acted as a judge of the fruit and vegetables at the prestigious Brighton Horticultural and Poultry Society's show, but this was a rare public duty.

At about this date (c.1871-72), Elliott was appointed horticultural editor of the *Leader* newspaper, and his discretion, knowledge and practical experience were strong points in his curriculum vitae. The *Leader* was an influential Melbourne weekly, published by the David Syme of the *Age* and like its rivals, the *Australasian* and the *Weekly Times*, had wide circulation in south eastern Australia, especially in country districts, providing regular horticultural news and comment in a period with few specialised horticultural journals.

Another major step in Elliott's career was his editorship of the tenth edition (1879) of *Adamson's Australian Gardener*, the major reference text for Victorian gardeners. Unlike his anonymity in the *Leader*, publisher William Adamson included the words 'Revised and corrected by William Elliott' on the title page, and in the preface explained:

The previous edition of the 'Australian Gardener' having become exhausted, I have decided on issuing a new and improved edition. And in order to meet the demands of my customers and others for a more full and complete work on Gardening in Victoria, I have secured the co-operation of a gardener of great experience, by whom nearly the whole has been re-written.

This was the first edition of the *Australian Gardener* to include extensive remarks on the flower garden and Elliott's significant revision of the text was very little changed in the 1884 edition. Indeed, much of his flavour can be detected in subsequent nineteenth century editions and even the 1916 edition contained residual traces of his prose.

Elliott meanwhile was still active as horticultural editor of the *Leader*. Josiah Mitchell (writing in the *Leader*) had been critical of Mueller in the early 1870s and in the 1880s several leading articles, presumably authored by Elliott, censured Guilfoyle, including the celebrated barbs of 15 April 1882 when the *Leader* commented disapprovingly about Guilfoyle's private work, and an 1890 assessment of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens fern gully as the 'meanest and most despicable'. Elliott was a judge with Guilfoyle for a Ballarat garden design competition in 1889 and one can only wonder at the small talk between the two.

Elliott's eminence in the horticultural world was confirmed by his authorship of an essay on 'Horticulture' in *Victoria and its resources* (Melbourne, 1893). This provided an authoritative summary of horticulture in the colony,

including remarks on public parks and gardens, botanic gardens, horticultural societies and private gardens (e.g. 'Flower gardening is chiefly of the old-fashioned style, massing or any other form of bedding being rarely attempted'). Elliott's major published work though was *Cole's Australasian Gardening and Domestic Floriculture* (Melbourne, 1896). On the title page, Elliott was described as '25 years Horticultural Editor, 'Leader' Newspaper' and in the preface he stated:

Having had many years experience in all branches of gardening, both in Great Britain and Australia, and having had numerous opportunities of witnessing the defects in the laying-out, planting, and otherwise decorating the suburban and other gardens in various parts of the colony, I have determined to put together my numerous notes on the subject, in accordance with the principles laid down by the best landscape gardeners.

This last statement is soon evident when *Australasian Gardening* is compared with Edward Kemp's *How to lay out a garden* (London, 1858 and 1864), which Elliott extensively copied in both style and substance. Plagiarism seems an ugly word in this situation and the publishing mores of the period (especially of publisher E.W. Cole) were obviously more relaxed in attitude to such copying than today. Perhaps when viewed from the late twentieth century we would feel more comfortable if Elliott had frankly acknowledged his source, and then the situation would have been more analogous with the 1911 edition of Kemp, edited by Professor F.A. Waugh for the North American market. Copying notwithstanding, the book includes much of interest and its popularity was attested by a 1903 edition and its reissue as *Law Somner & Co.'s Handbook to the Farm, Garden, and Orchard* (Melbourne, c.1910).

Elliott died on 24 September 1908 (aged 82) and was interred in the Brighton Cemetery, although his passing appeared unnoticed by the Melbourne press.

PLANT SEARCH

SEARCH FOR CHINESE ARTICHOKE

AGHS member, Howard Nicholson has sent this lithograph of a Chinese artichoke hoping it may be recognisable as a surviving plant in an early garden. Although referred to in *Cole's Australasian Gardening* (1903) as a recent introduction from China, there have been no references in books or catalogues since and the vegetable has all but disappeared in Australia. On a recent planting hunting expedition to China, Howard recognized the vegetable and was able to bring some tubers back through quarantine. Howard would like to hear from anyone that recalls seeing the vegetable in an Australian garden. Phone (048) 836303.



PLANTS FOR HISTORIC GARDENS

by TREVOR NOTTLE

A HISTORY OF THE GARDEN IN NEW ZEALAND

Edited by Matthew Bradbury
Published by Viking, Auckland, 1995
RRP \$17.95

AUSTRALIA'S TIMELESS GARDENS

by Judith Baskin and Trisha Dixon
RRP \$24.95
National Library of Australia, Canberra, 1996



Given the focus for this edition of *Australian Garden History* there seems at first a dearth of new books related to the theme of plants for historic gardens. Surely somewhere in the crush of new books that were released just in time for Christmas there must be something? I find I have to search high and low for a few likely subjects for review.

Awaiting my attention for some time has been *A History of the Garden in New Zealand*, edited by Matthew Bradbury and written with the assistance of garden-minded supporters of the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. Among the contributors are specialists in the fields of archaeology, garden history and landscape design. Several recent trips to New Zealand prompted me to take the book down and re-read it. What fascinates most is the first chapter, *Nga Mara – traditional Maori Gardens*, in which the extensive and skilled gardening practices of the Maori are described giving a wealth of detail supported by historic records and archaeological evidence. There follows a series of chapters which trace the history of gardening as it has developed in New Zealand since Europeans settled in the land of the long white cloud. Similarities with the history of gardening in Australia quickly became apparent yet there is scarcely any linkage made between the two despite their proximity and the existence of well developed trade in the 19th century. There is however extensive reference to Anglo-European (and American) design influences which reinforce the impression that colonists there, as

here, saw greater attachments to England than they did between each other. The Picturesque is followed by the Gardenesque; thence into Robinsonian and Jekyllian 'natural' garden designs and onwards into the 20th century and Tunnard's 'Modernism'. It is interesting to see in the index that Gertrude Jekyll gets two lines of page references while Edna Walling doesn't even appear. How much more interesting the book would have been for readers outside New Zealand had the editor sought from his writing team more comparative work than straight narrative text. After all, setting things in context is what history is supposed to be about. That small quibble aside there are some useful indicators in the final chapter about the future directions of gardening in New Zealand that suggest that gardeners in that country are at least thinking about moving into the 21st century! There is a very informative discussion on post-Modernism even though it is set in the context of Brierley Investments Ltd. and the aggressive 'Roger-nomics' of New Zealand in the 1980s. There is also reference to a developing regional gardening style which appears now (in 1997) to have been recycled with a more international focus (for example, Gil Hanly and Jacqueline Walker's *The Subtropical Garden*).

Had the editor taken a more directive role in the development of the book it would have had a stronger, more focused feel. As it is *A History of the Garden in New Zealand* is an informative collection of writings about gardening on the other side of the Tasman. It shows with excellent pictures but does not discuss with much illumination that aspect of our cultural history which we, Aussies and Kiwi's both, consider a lifestyle essential that sets us apart from others.

Waiting for me when I got back from my travels was *Australia's Timeless Gardens*, a handsome softcover which does have the benefit of a much tighter focus, and I think a more satisfying text. What I found satisfying were the wide ranging linkages which were developed and explained between what was happening here in Australia with what was happening in Europe. I will admit that the authors do not add anything to my understanding of what may have been happening between here and New Zealand, but that was clearly not what their survey was about: it is plainly limited to the development of private Australian gardens with specific reference to the pictorial collections of the National Library. As such it makes only a small, though significant claim on representing our garden history. And there is commentary throughout that shows insight beyond factual reportage; that is what I particularly find attractive about this book. The illustrations are first rate. Some are selected from the pictorial collections of the National Library of Australia; others are perceptively photographed by Trisha Dixon – all support the developing text with clarity and purpose.

What these books both suggest about plants for historic gardens is that our predecessors were eclectic gardeners when it came to acquiring plants. From the outset plants were transported as seeds, cuttings, bulbs and growing specimens from all the ports where ships called that were bound for Australia (and most likely New Zealand too). Perhaps it would not be improbable to suggest that eclecticism in our approach to gardening is as much a characteristic of it as distance is a characteristic of our country, if that is not stretching Professor Blainey's observation too far?

REVIEWED IN BRIEF

Plants that merit attention Vol. II – Shrubs

by Janet Meakin Poor and Nancy Peterson Brewster
Timber Press, Portland (USA), 1996
Approx. RRP \$90.00

Fuchsias, the complete guide

by Edwin Goulding
B.T. Batsford (UK), 1996
RRP \$55.00

Hydrangeas, a gardener's guide

by Toni Lawson-Hall and Brian Rothera
B.T. Batsford (UK), 1996
RRP \$55.00

The Siberian iris

by Currier McEwen
Timber Press, Portland (USA), 1996
RRP \$59.95

The gardener's guide to growing hostas

by Diana Grenfell
Florilegium Press, Sydney, 1996 RRP \$34.95

If eclecticism can be regarded as a telling characteristic of the history of Australian gardening then all the books reviewed here could be considered likely sources of future historic gardens. Each makes its own survey of the plants that come under its compass: shrubs, crab-apples, hosta, Siberian iris, hydrangeas, fuchsias. Each represents a selection of the finest plants within each category that may be had to date. And without doubt each author is regarded within the horticultural world as an expert. What remains is for the various groups of plants to be selected for their compatibility with the range of climates we know in Australia, for each author is 'expert' within a climatic zone far different to those which are in force here. And none of them ventures an opinion as to which of their pets and favourites will perform well in a wider climatic range than the one in which they are accustomed to grow and evaluate plants. So what can be said of the books themselves? Well written, readable but rather uncritical and catalogue-ish; each enthusiastic from a collector's point of view but lacking in inspirational suggestions about how each, or any special beauty could be successfully integrated into a general piece of gardening. Such a criticism is a very common one for the books are written by specialists for specialists, but they need to say something to a much wider audience. We are not all going to surrender to the particular charms of say, Siberian iris and turn our gardens solely over to their cultivation. Some of us have passed through the collective phase of our development as gardeners and have no wish to return to that acquisitive state of entrapment. Enthusiasts for the particular plant groups described by the titles will find the books give them a good read, are well written, current and authoritative. General gardeners will find them more or less helpful – how many of the crab-apples, hostas or irises described are available here? Garden historians will find the books current proof that as a nation of gardeners Australians are as eclectic as ever, still gathering plants and ideas about what plants to grow from far and wide; still having to assess plants, however many gold medals they may have won overseas against their ability to perform in the climates that operate in Australia.

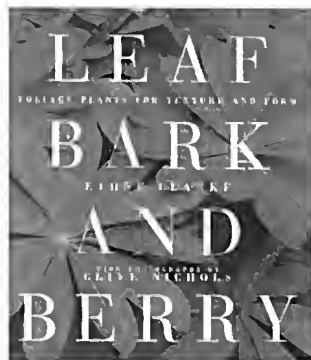


by HELEN PAGE

Christmas in England has been spent with Ethne Clarke and her family at Yaxham in Norfolk. Although not a white Christmas Day, heavy snow has fallen since and the countryside is now a picture. Many of you will remember Ethne from her keynote address at the AGHS Hobart Conference in 1993 and her subsequent talks in Melbourne and Adelaide. I thought you would enjoy hearing what she has been up to and her plans for 1997.

1996 has been very busy for her with lecture tours in April and October to the USA speaking to a number of groups including the Hardy Plant Society of Oregon, the Federated Garden Clubs of Massachusetts, and at Georgetown University on a number of garden history and design related subjects. Early in December she went to Bahrain to lecture to the Bahrain Garden Club at the invitation of Shaikha Seebeka Alkhalifa, the Crown Princess, who is an avid gardener. In ancient legend, Bahrain was known as Dilmun, the Garden of Eden, because of its wealth of fruit trees and oases nourished by the sweet waters of underground springs. To this day, Bahraini gardeners rely on these springs and an active gardening community, with its own gardening style and skills appropriate to a hot climate and irrigation, has developed. However, the Islamic tradition of gardens bisected by water canals and planted with date palm groves, pomegranates, and a wide range of sub-tropical foliage plants prevails. Choice bulbs and a form of highly perfumed damask rose known locally as the 'Bahraini rose' are planted as single specimens, so that the effect is like a living Persian carpet.

Ethne Clarke in her garden at Yaxham. **Below:** Her latest book, *Leaf, Bark and Berry*, is available in Australia and retails at \$44.95.



royals and much of the Italian nobility. When visiting the villas and gardens of Tuscany, in places like Villa Medici at Fiesole, La Foce, I Tatti, Le Balze you will see villas and gardens designed by Cecil Pinsent.

In her 'spare time' Ethne will be working in her delightful garden where she is planning many changes in planting in line with the concepts she proposes in *Leaf, Bark and Berry*. Already groups are requesting to visit the garden in the spring and summer.

Ethne recalls with pleasure her visit to Australia and the many friendships she made and happily maintains. She looks forward to returning one day to explore more of what our great country offers and in the meantime hopes that if you are in the Norfolk area, you will get in touch – you will always be welcome.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH

SUNDAY 2 NSW Sydney – Guided walk of the shady small streets, sandstone buildings and cottage gardens of the historic French suburb of Hunters Hill. Visit Vienna Cottage and orchard. **Venue** Meet at 38 Alexandra Street, Hunters Hill. **Time** 3.30pm to commence walk at 4pm. **Cost** \$5. **Enquiries** (02) 9428 5947.

SUNDAY 9 Tasmania – Tamar Gardens. Visit to four gardens with views over Supply Bay and the Tamar River including a 16th century inspired herb garden and cottage garden featuring many unusual plantings along a picturesque drive from Deviot to Legana. **Commences** 11am **Enquiries** (03) 6397 3161 / (03) 6223 7997.

WEDNESDAY 12 NSW Southern Highlands – Morning visit to Duxfield specialist nursery with talk by owner about unusual perennials. Morning tea will be provided. **Venue** Duxfield Nursery, Illawarra Highway, Moss Vale. **Time** 10.30am. **Cost** Members \$8, non-members \$10. **Bookings and enquiries** Dorothy Sears (048) 834 324 and Nicholas Bray (048) 611 315.

TUESDAY 25 SA Adelaide – Lecture: Dr Lance McCarthy will speak on Robert Brown and Ferdinand Bauer, botanist and botanical artist on Matthew Flinders 'Investigator' (1801-1803). This follows the recent exhibition 'A Fusion of Art and Science' at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens (open until 30 March). **Fee** Supper donation \$2. Parking available adjacent to Admin. building off North Terrace and behind glasshouses. Friends and guests welcome. **Time** 7.30pm **Venue** ABG Lecture Theatre Room.

APRIL

FRIDAY 11–SUNDAY 13 NSW Armidale – Parks and Gardens Seminar Co-hosted by AGHS and National Trust. A weekend learning to appreciate the significance of cultural landscape heritage with lectures and discussions including site visits to some surprising and outstanding local gardens. **Enquiries/bookings** (02) 9258 0169.

WEDNESDAY 30 Vic Melbourne – Exhibition of botanical illustrations by Lady Law-Smith. **Time** 5.30–7.30pm. **Cost** \$25.00 (members) \$30.00 (non-members), includes drinks and savouries. Pre-purchased tickets only. Limited tickets available. **Bookings** (03) 9650 5043.

SUNDAY 20 NSW Southern Highlands – Open day at Hillview, Illawarra Highway, Sutton Forest, former country residence of Governors of NSW. This is an opportunity to visit Hillview on your way to the pre-conference tour. **Venue** Hillview, Illawarra Highway, Sutton Forest. **Time** 10am–4pm. **Cost** Non-members \$4. **Enquiries** Trish Goodman (048) 683 581.

MONDAY 21–WEDNESDAY 23 NSW – Pre-Conference Tour of 19th century gardens in Bungendore, Braidwood and Monaro districts. Tour departs and finishes in Canberra with one evening at the Carrington in Braidwood and another at Cooma. **Cost** \$450 (Members) twin share.

FRIDAY 25–SUNDAY 27 ACT – 1997 Annual AGHS Conference in Canberra. The City as Garden is the theme, and will explore gardens in the 20th century city of Canberra. Enjoy Canberra's rich garden history during the splendour of autumn. **Enquiries** (06) 258 4547 or (03) 9650 5043.

MONDAY 28 ACT Optional day visiting a range of urban and rural gardens including embassies, Lambrigg Station and the garden at the Canberra Deep Space Communication Complex at Tidbinbilla. (Booking form enclosed.)

MAY

SUNDAY 4 NSW Central Coast – Gardens visit. Morning tea at Garrawin, Mangrove Mountain, settled in 1914 and developed by three generations of the Madsen family. Lunch at Paradise Gardens, a thirty acre camellia garden and wholesale nursery at Kulnura. Food stalls on site or BYO lunch. **Cost** \$10.00 members and friends. **Time** 10.30am. **Bookings** (02) 9428 5947 or (02) 9328 6800. Pre-payment essential for map and directions.

JUNE

TUESDAY 24 NSW Sydney – Flora Treasures, Australian and International, from the Rare Books Section of the State Library. An illustrated talk by John Murphy, curator of 'Possessed' Great Treasures of the State Library and a view of the exhibition. Co-hosted by AGHS and The Library Society of NSW in The Gallery, Mitchell Wing, State Library. **Time** 5.30pm. **Cost** \$10.00 members, \$15.00 non members. **Enquiries/bookings** (02) 9428 5947.

JULY

SUNDAY 27 NSW Southern Highlands – AGM with afternoon tea. **Venue** Links House, 17 Links Road, Bowral. **Time** 3pm. No charge. **Enquiries** (048) 352205 or (02) 9929 5775.

AUGUST

SUNDAY 10 NSW Southern Highlands – Winter Lecture by Judith Baskin, librarian turned garden writer and heritage consultant, with lunch at Peppers Mount Broughton followed by a visit to a well structured winter garden. **Time** 11am. **Bookings** (048) 683 581.

OCTOBER

SUNDAY 12 NSW Southern Highlands – Visit to the Old Rectory, Berrima, owned by Maxine Stewart. This large garden is believed to be the original Paul Sorensen nursery and includes a paeony farm. **Enquiries** (048) 683581 or (02) 9398 8117.

NOVEMBER

SUNDAY 2 NSW Southern Highlands – Open Day at Hillview, Sutton Forest (same details as **SUNDAY 20 APRIL**)

WINTER

ACT – A series of four lectures on the history and meaning of gardens by Professor Ken Taylor and Dianne Firth, Faculty of Environmental Design, University of Canberra. The lectures will review the art of gardens from the earliest times of the classical world, through the paradise gardens of Islam and Renaissance Italy, the English tradition and eighteenth century landscape ideology, to the Australian tradition. Phone the ACT/Monaro and Riverina Branch on 06 258 4547 to ensure place on list.



MAZE OF HISTORY AT DUNTROON

by RICHARD RATCLIFFE

Duntroon house built by Robert Campbell and extended by his son George has a garden mainly developed by George's wife, Marion, who was not only a gardener but also a plant collector, botanist and a watercolorist specialising in flower painting. In the latter she was very skilled, having been taught art as a young woman by Conrad Martens.

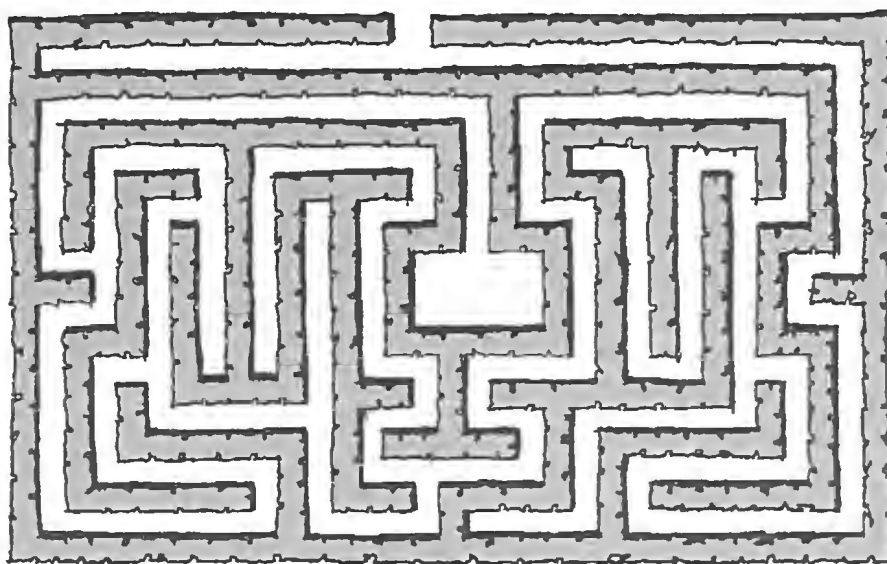
As part of the development she planted the maze, c.1871, based on the plan of the maze at Hampton Court in England but squared up and smaller in size. Privet, *Ligustrum ovalifolium* was used as the hedging. The maze remained during the early years of occupancy of Duntroon by the Royal Military College which still uses the house as the Officers' Mess.

In 1954, the college decided to remove the maze. Legend has it that the officers were concerned about the cadets' moral welfare as they were seen taking female companions into the maze. It is far more likely that it was removed because of the cost of maintaining the hedges. In 1965, the maze was reinstated by the ground staff of the college using the original plan although it is thought that the present maze is only about two thirds of the size of the original. By this time,

Above: The Duntraan maze was based on the Hamptan Court maze, the aldest in England – but on a mare madest scale.

Below: The maze reconstructed with Cotoneaster microphylla in 1965.

there was concern that privet could be declared a noxious weed so the hedges were planted in *Cotoneaster microphylla*. Paradoxically privet, while not used very often, has *not* been listed as noxious in the ACT but there is a voluntary ban by nurserymen on the sale of all species of cotoneaster which have proved a pest of bushland around Canberra.



The cotoneaster performed poorly as it did not respond well to the frequent cutting needed in hedging. By the late 1970s it became dangerous with sharp twigs projecting at children's eye level with the result that the maze was closed to the public. The continued cutting also caused much of the planting to fall and some filling of gaps was attempted using box which also failed. Recently the

remaining cotoneaster has been cut back to ground level and regeneration is occurring. Plants to fill gaps have been propagated from the new growth.

The restoration of the maze has been on the college agenda for many years but with the current economic climate it is an item with low priority and no one is prepared to give any indication on when it may happen.

RICHARD RATCLIFFE is a Canberra landscape architect working almost exclusively in heritage conservation. In 1990 he was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study conservation of heritage landscapes in Europe and USA. He is the author of *Australia's Master Gardener, the Gardens of Paul Sarensen*. Recent works include the restoration of Everglades in the Blue Mountains, Highfields at Stanley in Tasmania and the Davidson Whaling Station near Eden. He is a foundation member of the AGHS, has served on the National Management Committee and is a past president of the ACT, Riverina and Monaro Branch of the society.